**FOREIGN
BROADCAST
INFORMATION
SERVICE**

Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-059
Tuesday
26 March 1996

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-059 CONTENTS *26 March 1996*

NOTICE: An * indicates material that may not be disseminated in electronic form.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab Affairs: UN's Butrus-Ghali on Iraq, Libya, Sahara *[London AL-HAYAH 22 Mar]* 1

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Text' of Draft National Charter Published *[AL-HADATH 25 Mar]* 1
Palestinian Affairs: DFLP's Hawatimah Calls For Charter Amendment *[Jericho VOP]* 3
Palestinian Affairs: Quray' Terms Israeli Measures 'Assassination' of Peace *[Jericho VOP]* 3
Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat, European Envoy Discuss 'Siege,' European Role *[Jericho VOP]* 3
Palestinian Affairs: Hamas-PA Reconciliation Initiative Reported *[JMCC PRESS SERVICE]* 4
Palestinian Affairs: Former Hamas Leader Mediating Reconciliation Talks Bid *[AFP]* 5
Palestinian Affairs: 'Urayqat Says PA Rejects Sharm al-Shaykh Follow-Up Agenda *[AFP]* 5
Palestinian Affairs: 'Ashrawi Ready To Sign Affidavit for Musa Abu-Marzuq *[AFP]* 6

Arab-Israeli Talks

Arab-Israeli Talks: IDF, PA Officials Discuss Closure, War on Terror *[THE JERUSALEM POST 26 Mar]* 6

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

Algeria: Article Details Factions Split From GIA Leadership *[London AL-HAYAH 23 Mar]* 8
Algeria: Officials Charged With Embezzlement *[Algiers TV]* 8
Algeria: Ministry Suspends Weekly for Justifying Terrorism *[Algiers Radio]* 9

Egypt

Egypt: Mubarak Receives al-Qadhdhafi Envoy *[MENA]* 9
Egypt: Mubarak Receives Message From Libya's al-Qadhdhafi *[MENA]* 9
Egypt: Musa on Summit, Israeli Measures, Ties to Southeast Asia *[MENA]* 9
Egypt: Cairo Concerned About Risks From Israel's Nuclear Reactor *[MENA]* 10
Egypt: Commentary Says Israeli Military Strikes Counterproductive *[Cairo Radio]* 10
Egypt: World Bank Willing To Finance More Projects *[MENA]* 11
Egypt: World Bank Head Discusses Country's Economy, Growth *[MENA]* 11
Egypt: Criminal Extradition Agreement Signed With Cyprus *[MENA]* 11
Egypt: Mubarak, Hungary's Goncz Hold Talks in Cairo *[Cairo Radio]* 11

Libya

Libya: Officer in U.S. Said 'Behind' Coup Attempt *[London MBC TV]* 12
Libya: Minister Denies Building of Chemical Weapons Plant *[AFP]* 12
Libya: Al-Qadhdhafi, Russia's Davydov Condemn U.S. 'Aggression' *[JANA]* 13

Sudan

Sudan: Airplane Hijackers Seek Political Asylum in Eritrea *[AFP]* 13

Sudan: Government Seeks Extradition of Hijackers in Eritrea *[AFP]* 13
Sudan: SUNA Reports Return of Hijacked Plane to Khartoum 14
Sudan: Eritrea Detains 3 Iranian Passengers From Hijacked Plane *[MENA]* 14
Sudan: Al-Turabi on Election Victory, Role of Islam *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 21 Mar]* 14

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Bahrain

Bahrain: Killer of Corporal Executed by Firing Squad *[WAKH]* 21
Bahrain: Police Fire Tear Gas To Disperse Qambar Mourners *[AFP]* 21
Bahrain: Opposition Faxes Statement to AFP Condemning Execution *[AFP]* 21
Bahrain: Suspects Arrested for Throwing Incendiary Bombs at School *[WAKH]* 21
Bahrain: Iranian Daily Cites Reports on Arrests in Bahrain *[SALAM 17 Mar]* 22

Kuwait

Kuwait: SAIRI's al-Hakim on UNSC Resolution 986 *[AL-WATAN 16 Feb]* 22
Kuwait: SAIRI's al-Hakim on Expected Developments *[AL-WATAN 17 Feb]* 24
Kuwait: Government Rejects Proposal on Sex Segregation *[KUNA]* 26

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: 'Official' Saudi Newspaper Calls Iraqi Elections 'Farce' *[AFP]* 27
Saudi Arabia: Statement on Decision To Deport Dr. Muhammad al-Mas'ari *[London CDLR Monitor]* 27

Yemen

Yemen: Joint Yemeni-Omani Committee Begins Meetings *[Sanaa TV]* 28

IRAQ

Iraq: Commission Announces Assembly Election Winners *[INA]* 29
Iraq: Names of National Assembly Election Winners Announced *[Baghdad TV]* 29
Iraq: Saddam Commends Election Committee Efforts *[Baghdad TV]* 32
Iraq: SAIRI Releases Statement Rejecting Parliamentary Elections *[Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution]* 33
Iraq: Saddam Husayn Visits Shiite Imam Tomb in Samarra' *[Baghdad TV]* 34
Iraq: Al-Basrah Security Center, Governor's Office Reportedly Attacked *[Voice of Rebellious Iraq]* 34

ISRAEL

Israel: Peres on Elections, Peace Process, 'Wild' Countries *[Jerusalem Radio]* 35
Israel: IDF General Announces Further Arrests in West Bank *[Jerusalem Radio]* 36
Israel: Savir Meets U.S. Ambassador, Officials on PA Jobs *[Jerusalem Radio]* 36
Israel: Shin Bet Director Replaces Head of Security Department *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 25 Mar]* .. 36
Israel: Yatom's Role as Mosad Chief Previewed *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 22 Mar]* 36
Israel: Mosad Weaknesses Viewed; Changes Recommended *[TEL AVIV 22 Mar]* 38
Israel: Peres Hailed for Conduct in Terror Crisis *[HA'ARETZ 26 Mar]* 41
Israel: U.S. Embassy Rejects 'Amir Family Visa Request *[Jerusalem Radio]* 42

JORDAN

Jordan: Al-Mu'ashshir Cited on Iraqi Diplomat Expulsion, Camps *[Amman Radio]* 43
Jordan: Iraq, Abu-Nidal Reportedly Planning Attacks Against Jordan *[AL-HADATH 25 Mar]* 43
Jordan: Daily Claims Iraq Tried 'To Disturb' Jordanian-Palestinian Ties *[SHIHAN 29 Mar]* 43
Jordan: Israel's Beilin Says Closure 'Not Solution Forever' *[Amman TV]* 44

Jordan: Columnist Warns Peres Against Continuing 'Unjust' Measures *[AL-RA'Y 24 Mar]* 44
Jordan: Editorial Questions Israel's 'True Intentions' Toward Peace *[AL-DUSTUR 23 Mar]* 45

LEBANON

Lebanon: Buwayz—Bush Visit Shows U.S. Officials Can Travel 'Safely' *[Beirut Radio]* 46
Lebanon: Radio Reports on Bush's Visit to Region, Program *[VOL]* 46
Lebanon: Dallul Interviewed on Israel's Objectives in Lebanon *[Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI 22 Mar]* 46

SYRIA

Syria: Iraqi Opposition Parties Meet in Damascus, Issue Communique *[Voice of the People of Kurdistan]* 48
Syria: Commentary Urges End to Israeli 'Mockery' of Peace *[Damascus Radio]* 48
Syria: Press Warns Against 'Sympathy' With Israel *[Damascus Radio]* 48
Syria: Former U.S. President Bush Arrives in Damascus 26 Mar *[Damascus Radio]* 50
Syria: President al-Asad Receives Chinese Delegation *[SANA]* 50

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Taleban Missile Attacks Injure 4 in Kabul *[Kabul Radio]* 51
Afghanistan: Hekmatyar, Kabul Discuss 'Possible Accord' *[AFP]* 51

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: Zia Calls For End to 'Chaos'; Opposition Leader Comments *[AFP]* 51
Bangladesh: Parliament Passes 'Nonparty Caretaker Government' Bill *[Dhaka Radio]* 52
Bangladesh: Opposition Rejects Landmark Bill, Wants Zia To Resign *[AFP]* 52
Bangladesh: Rocket Launchers, Mortars Seized From Fishing Trawlers *[Dhaka Radio]* 53

India

India: Reinforcements Sent To Clear Kashmir Shrine of Militants *[Delhi Radio]* 53
India: PTV Reports Gun Battle Continuing Near Shrine in Kashmir 53
India: Further on Situation, Developments at Kashmir Shrine *[Delhi Radio]* 54
India: Curfew Continues in Hazratbal Shrine Area *[Delhi Radio]* 54
India: Kashmir Government Asks All Militants To Surrender *[Delhi Radio]* 54
India: Kashmir Militants Set Conditions for Talks With Delhi *[Islamabad Radio]* 54
India: Police Recover Bodies From Kashmir Shrine; Talks Underway *[Delhi Radio]* 55
India: Further on Recovery of Bodies From Kashmir Shrine *[AFP]* 55
India: JKLF Spokesman Demands Lifting of Hazratbal Siege *[AFP]* 56
India: Situation Around Kashmir Shrine 'Explosive' *[Islamabad TV]* 56
India: Militants in Kashmir Shrine 'Surrendering' *[AFP]* 57
India: Delhi TV Reports Militants Leaving Kashmir Shrine 57
India: Party Official, Six Others Killed in Bomb Blast *[Delhi Radio]* 57
India: Commission Urges Allowing Amnesty International To Visit Kashmir *[Delhi Radio]* 57
India: Lok Sabha Elections in Kashmir Rescheduled *[Delhi Radio]* 57
India: Report Details Communist Party Election Manifesto *[THE PIONEER 23 Mar]* 58

Iran

Iran: President Rafsanjani Calls For Exploitation of Gas *[IRNA]* 59
Iran: Rafsanjani Inaugurates Iron-Ore Mining, Piped Gas Projects *[Tehran TV]* 59

Iran: President Visits Sirjan Free-Trade Zone *[IRNA]* 60
Iran: President Rafsanjani Continues Kerman Visit *[IRNA]* 60
Iran: Paper Says Country 'Bought Time' for Germany *[KEYHAN 17 Mar]* 60
Iran: Paper Calls On Government To Adopt Stand Against Germany *[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 18 Mar]* 61
Iran: Tehran Radio Reviews Year of 'Problems' for U.S. Policy *[Tehran Radio]* 62
Iran: U.S. Attempts To Block Chinese Nuclear Cooperation Viewed *[Tehran International]* 63
Iran: Commentary Examines Iraqi Elections *[Tehran Radio]* 63
Iran: Article Examines Jordan's Cultural Problems With Israel *[JOMHURI-YE ELSAMI 16 Mar]* 64
Iran: Commentary Views Relations Within Gulf Cooperation Council *[Tehran Radio]* 64
Iran: Foreign Ministry Spokesman Rejects Terrorism Charges *[Tehran TV]* 65
Iran: French Firm Advances Sirri Oil Project *[IRNA]* 65
Iran: Paper Hails Inauguration of Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan Railway *[IRNA]* 65
Iran: Tehran Not To Import Meat From Britain *[Tehran Radio]* 66
Iran: Former Official Addresses Appeal to Populace *[SOBH 12 Mar]* 66
Iran: KHORASAN on Liberals' 'Ploy' in Majles Elections *[17 Mar]* 66
Iran: Tehran's Regional Efforts During Past Year Viewed *[Tehran Radio]* 67
Iran: Official Notes Concerted Efforts Made on Water Projects *[IRNA]* 68
Iran: SOBH Newspaper Celebrates First Anniversary *[12 Mar]* 68
Iran: Article Views Importance of Fifth Majles *[PASDAR-E ESLAM Dec-Jan]* 69
Iran: Director of GOZARESH Condemned to Prison *[London KEYHAN 4 Jan]* 71
Iran: Sheykh 'Ali Tehrani Condemned to Exile *[London KEYHAN 4 Jan]* 71
Iran: Further on Sheykh 'Ali Tehrani's Exile *[London KEYHAN 18 Jan]* 71
Iran: Second Trial Session for GARDUN Director *[London KEYHAN 18 Jan]* 71
Iran: Uprising Reported in Shiraz' 'Adelabad Prison *[London KEYHAN 18 Jan]* 72
Iran: Skirmishes Reported at Tabriz University *[London KEYHAN 18 Jan]* 72
Iran: Ministry Says Budget Lacking for Fighting AIDS *[London KEYHAN 18 Jan]* 72
Iran: Five Hundred University Professors Dismissed *[London KEYHAN 7 Mar]* 72

Pakistan

Pakistan: Foreign Minister Leaves for Geneva *[Islamabad Radio]* 73
Pakistan: Kashmir Mosque Siege Linked to Hindu 'Fanaticism' *[Islamabad Radio]* 73
Pakistan: Spokesman Expresses Concern Over Indian Shrine Siege *[Islamabad Radio]* 74
Pakistan: Possible Deal With France for Mirage 2000-5's Viewed *[THE NEWS 26 Mar]* 74
Pakistan: Defense Minister Denies Government To 'Forego' F-16's *[THE NATION 26 Mar]* 75
Pakistan: PPP Supports Treason Charges Against Supreme Court Judges *[THE NATION 25 Mar]* 75
Pakistan: Ministers Rule Out Compromise With Karachi 'Terrorists' *[Islamabad Radio]* 75
Pakistan: Indian Efforts To Gain Influence in Afghanistan Reported *[THE MUSLIM 23 Mar]* 76

Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab Affairs: UN's Butrus-Ghali on Iraq, Libya, Sahara

MM2203140596 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 22 Mar 96 pp 1, 6

[Report by Randah Taqiyy-al-Din in Paris and Raghidah Dirgham in New York: "Ghali Tells AL-HAYAH: We Hope That a Solution Compatible With Iraq's Sovereignty Will Be Secured"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Paris — UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali, who is visiting France, has said that he briefed President Jacques Chirac on UN efforts concerning the implementation of Resolution 986. He expressed his hope that "a solution compatible with Iraq's sovereignty" would be secured. He also pointed out that he is in contact with the Libyan authorities on the subject of implementing the Security Council resolutions.

Ghali told AL-HAYAH that his meeting with President Chirac was "very positive, and there is very important support from the French president for the United Nations with regard to the financial crisis it is experiencing and the reforms it is working to implement."

He added that Chirac had enquired during the meeting about the UN efforts concerning Resolution 986 on the "oil for food" formula.

Ghali said that he had briefed the French president on the difficulties facing the United Nations in its efforts to secure a peaceful settlement to the Western Sahara issue.

He denied reports that he was intending to call for UN-Iraq negotiations in Geneva to implement Resolution 986. He said that Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz had contacted him a few days previously, "and we agreed that there was a need for a third round of talks, which will begin on 7 or 8 April."

He declined to go into the details of the implementation of Resolution 986, especially with regard to ways of distributing food and medicines to the Kurds. He expressed his hope that a "solution compatible with Iraqi sovereignty and the stipulations of the resolution will be secured, because my mission is governed by the stipulations of this resolution."

With regard to the Western Sahara issue, Ghali said that what is still obstructing an agreement is the dispute over who is entitled to vote in the referendum on the Saharan issue, since that should be determined in the presence of a representative for the Saharan chiefs and another for the Moroccans, but sometimes one of the two representatives does not turn up — which makes the process very difficult. Ghali stressed that the United Nations should continue to work to resolve the crisis as soon as possible.

He denied reports of the existence of military deployments on the Moroccan-Algerian border, saying: "That is untrue. There is a political desire among the parties concerned to secure a settlement to the Saharan issue.

On Libya, which is expected to be discussed during President Chirac's visit to Cairo 6-8 April, Ghali said: "I am instructed by the Security Council to make contacts with the Libyan Government in order to implement the Council's resolutions concerning Libya. I am in contact with Libyan authorities, and I hope that a settlement will be reached." [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Text' of Draft National Charter Published

JN2503122996 Amman AL-HADATH in Arabic 25 Mar 96 p 1

[Report by Anwar al-Khatib]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] AL-HADATH obtained the text of a draft Palestinian National Charter prepared by the PLO Executive Committee. The draft will be presented to the Palestine National Council, expected to meet in Gaza early May. [passage omitted]

The following is the text of the draft Palestinian National Charter:

In continuation of the struggle march of the Palestinian people and to enhance it and consolidate its foundations, the PLO Executive Committee drafted a National Charter that represents the ambitions and aspirations of our great people to establish their independent state on their soil.

Arab and international political developments, as well as developments in the Palestinian-Israeli arena, played a major role in the preparation of this draft, which organizes the Palestinian-Israeli relationship within its proper context and on clear foundations.

The PLO Executive Committee presents this draft to the National Council to receive its support, confidence, and blessing. The PLO Executive Committee dreams of a bright future in which the people would live in peace and serenity.

Draft of the Palestinian National Charter:

Article 1: Palestine is the homeland of the Palestinian people. Palestine is an indivisible part of the greater Arab homeland and the Palestinian people are part of the Arab nation.

Article 2: The system of government in the Palestinian state is parliamentary, republican, and is based on respect for legitimacy and for the Charter, in letter and spirit. This is meant to consolidate the unity of the people and leadership.

Article 3: Islam is the official religion of the state and Arabic is its official language.

Article 4: Palestinians are the Arab citizens who normally resided in Palestine until 1947. This includes those who were forced to leave and those who stayed. Palestinians also include all those who were born to a Palestinian Arab father after this date inside or outside Palestine.

Article 5: Palestinians, men and women, are equal before the law. There shall be no discrimination between them in rights and duties, even if they are different in ethnic origin, language, or religion. They shall exercise their constitutional rights and comply with the homeland's higher interests and the ethics of national action. This is meant to unleash the Palestinian community's material and spiritual capabilities and devote its energies toward achieving their objectives of unity, progress, and creating a bright future.

Article 6: Coexistence between the Palestinians and the Israelis is an irrevocable matter that requires both peoples to observe each others' security, traditions, customs, and conditions.

Article 7: The Palestinian state will be committed to respecting the Israeli State. The Palestinian people will be committed to living in peace with the Israeli people.

Article 8: The Palestinian state is a state of law, according to the modern concept of a democratic state. It is the state of all citizens, regardless of differences in their opinions. It derives its strength from the actual and declared implementation of the principles of equality and justice. It will provide equal opportunities and enable the Palestinian people to take part in making decisions that concern their lives and affairs. This should provide peace of mind for citizens and give them confidence in the future and enhance zeal for the state establishments and pride in the honor of belonging to the homeland.

Article 9: Achieving Palestinian national security requires giving more attention to the armed forces, expanding their groundwork, beefing up and developing their capabilities, and mobilizing the energies of the homeland and people in order to support these forces and enable them to fulfill their duties, protect the homeland, and contribute to its construction and development. This should realize the highest degrees of coalescence among all segments of people and protection of the homeland's security and achievements.

Article 10: Commitment to the supremacy of law within the framework of the independent judiciary's complete surveillance.

Article 11: Resorting to democratic dialogue in expressing opinions away from all methods of exerting pressure and intellectual terrorism on all formal and popular levels.

Article 12: The economic system of the Palestinian state will be established on respect for private property and encouraging the individual initiative. It will also rely on asserting the state's ownership of the natural resources and strategic projects and its right to administer or supervise these resources and projects in accordance with the public interest. The state will also organize the economy and allocate resources according to national priorities.

Article 13: The state will provide job opportunities for all citizens and draw up polices and take measures that will safeguard this right. National plans to promote economic activities will be drafted in order to absorb more work force and improve working conditions. The education system will be developed and linked to the society's needs. Work will be given a high social value.

Article 14: The future unionist relationship between Jordan and Palestine is an irrevocable issue. Maintaining this relationship requires recognizing the options of the Jordanians and Palestinians in terms of realizing the best formula for unity, which should also be a model for a comprehensive Arab unity.

Article 15: Efforts will be made to establish a form of unity among the Arab countries that have faith in unity, taking into account pan-Arab, national, and objective considerations. This unity should meet and safeguard the real interests of the peoples of these countries and observe the special character of these countries.

Article 16: The charter underlines commitment to the Arab nation's crucial causes and pan-Arab priorities. The positions of the Arab state should be defined, because the clarity and genuineness of these positions will be the objective criterion for the soundness of the national and pan-Arab policies and orientations.

Article 17: This charter will be amended only with the approval of two-thirds of the Palestine National Council in a session that will be called for this purpose.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination

Palestinian Affairs: DFLP's Hawatimah Calls For Charter Amendment

JN2503134496 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Nayif Hawatimah, Democratic Front the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] secretary general, called today for amending the Palestinian National Charter in a manner that is in line with international legitimacy.

In a statement distributed by the DFLP office in Damascus, Hawatimah said that his call for amending the charter is a new balanced initiative in exchange for Israel's recognition of international legitimacy and the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

Palestinian Affairs: Quray' Terms Israeli Measures 'Assassination' of Peace

JN2603093896 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0430 GMT 26 Mar 96

[Telephone interview with Ahmad Quray', alias Abu-'Ala', speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council, by Ibrahim Milhim; place and date not given—recorded; from the "A New Day" feature]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Milhim] Good Morning Abu-'Ala'.

[Quray'] Good morning. You are welcome.

[Milhim] What measures have you adopted so far to end the siege on Palestine?

[Quray'] In fact, all we can do is convey the degree of injustice done to the Palestinian people to the cosponsors of the peace conference, the international community, the Arab countries, and all those concerned with the peace process because the Israeli measures destroy this process. I consider what Israel is doing now an assassination of the peace process, at least on the Palestinian-Israeli track.

[Milhim] Does this assassination mean the return of occupation?

[Quray'] I cannot say the occupation was ever over, but the occupation renewed its presence in the West Bank. What we see today is a systematic reoccupation of the West Bank. This is something that cannot be accepted under any circumstances. [passage omitted]

[Milhim] Abu-'Ala', the agreements emphasized that the Palestinian territory is one geographic unit, but what we see on the ground is that the territory has been fragmented and that Palestinians cannot travel from one city to another.

[Quray'] In fact, we never imagined that the unity of the West Bank was in doubt or that the unity of Gaza Strip was in doubt. This was not an issue in the agreements. There are clear articles in the agreements, whether in the Oslo A, Oslo B agreements, or even in the Cairo agreement that the West Bank and Gaza Strip are one political and geographic unit. This was the text in the agreements. The West Bank has been separated from the Gaza Strip as never before. Since 1967, measures similar to the current measures have never been taken. The West Bank is fragmented and isolated; this is unbearable.

[Milhim] Abu-'Ala', after what you see and the daily Israeli practices we witness, do you regret concluding the Oslo agreement?

[Quray'] In fact this is not the subject, and I think the question is a bad one. It is not a matter of regret, and I do not want to ask about the alternative, but I believe that this process will eventually succeed. What is happening now will be changed through much patience, pressure, and good performance on the Palestinian track. If this change takes place, it will be followed by a breakthrough. [passage omitted]

[Milhim] Will the Israelis abide by withdrawal from Hebron on the set date?

[Quray'] So far, I do not have accurate information on this because I heard two contradictory statements. In the first statement, the Israeli prime minister said he may decide in the final moments. Other information attributed to an Israeli official spokesman revealed that the withdrawal is delayed as the commander of the Central Region said. Anyhow, in my opinion and according to the agreement, and as long as the agreement is a bilateral one, and because a change in the agreement should be carried out by the two sides, Peres has no right to delay the withdrawal date or to say that he will decide in the final moments. Likewise, the commander of the Central Region has no right to say that this date will be postponed. If the redeployment in Hebron is delayed, the convening of the Palestine National Council will be in doubt. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat, European Envoy Discuss 'Siege,' European Role

JN2603084496 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat received (Thomas Douglas), representative of the European Commission to the National Authority, at the Presidential Office in Gaza last night.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination

They discussed the political and economic situation of the Palestinian people under the Israeli military and economic siege, and the role of the European Union in overcoming the economic difficulties facing the Palestinian people.

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas-PA Reconciliation Initiative Reported

TA2503143096 Jerusalem JMCC PRESS SERVICE in English 0610 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Eleven Palestinian figures, including top faction leaders, signed a proposal for a reconciliation between Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], the Islamic Jihad, and the Palestinian Authority [PA]. The initiative calls on the PA to stop its arrest and raid campaigns and to release its political prisoners. It calls on Hamas and the Islamic Jihad to stop its military activities and to help the PA to continue on the peace track. It was not known how the signatories plan to implement a reconciliation between the Islamic factions and the PA. The signatories are: Dr. Riyad al-Maliki, former spokesman, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine Jamil Hamami, Islamist figure in Jerusalem Faysal al-Husayni, PA official in Jerusalem Ghassan al-Khatib, Palestinian People's Party spokesman Dr. Mahmud al-Ramahi, Hamas official in Ramallah Dr. Mahdi 'Abd-al-Hadi, academic Marwan al-Barghuthi, Fatah leader in West Bank Dr. Nazmi al-Ju'bah, FIDA [Palestinian Democratic Union] official Dr. Khalil al-Shaqaqi, academic Samia Khuri, women's activist Hajj 'Abd-Abu-Dhiyab, personality from Jerusalem Text of Statement:

In light of recent developments, what has happened in our Palestinian homeland, and the situation of our Palestinian people, And based on our patriotic and religious duty, And to try to help reaffirm our unity,

Based on our conviction that the language of dialogue, logic and mutual respect is the best way to understand events and deal with them, and the best way to solve current and future problems,

We declare our position and our desire to retain our steadfastness and unity and to alleviate the pain of our people:

We fully believe that the brothers in the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] and the brothers in the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) and Islamic Jihad — despite their differences in policy and action toward the peace process — are able to get over this stage. They realize that the language of dialogue and logic is the rational way to reach joint positions for a bright Palestinian future. We affirm that we must work together according to what we agree upon, and excuse each other for what we disagree upon.

We are fully aware that the PNA has the right to defend its experiment in a framework of political pluralism, respect of one other's opinions, and a civilized understanding of any political difference that might take place. We also believe that all the other Palestinian forces have the right to defend their ideas and positions according to the law and in the framework of political pluralism.

Strengthening the foundations of our Palestinian house, working together for the success fo our people's choice, and protecting all forms of our national and religious institutions — which help in building the state and alleviating our people's pain — are patriotic and religious duties requiring all to protect and defend them for the sake of our future generations.

Our Palestinian nation is passing through a tough and exacting stage. We trust fully that it can get over this stage as it did stages that were no less exacting in the past. Despite the different positions of the national and Islamic forces on the Palestinian scene, our patriotic duty drives us to allow the PNA to practice its role in establishing the pillars of a democratic society by establishing institutions and legislation, dividing authorities, and developing its relations with all regional and international parties.

Based on this, we implore the PNA and all national and Islamic forces in the Palestinian house to cooperate and coordinate to achieve the following:

1) Activate a comprehensive national dialogue in a way that it becomes institutionalized. This is to preserve positive interaction between all Palestinian forces, to guarantee sacred national unity.

2) All Palestinian forces must commit to stop military activities and continue the coordination and consultations for the success of the current political track.

3) A commitment to the preservation of human rights under the law must be made. Arrests and raids must stop, and all prisoners and detainees held without reason or legal justification must be released.

4) A commitment must be made to freedom of expression and assembly under the law must be made. The national lines should not be crossed in media activities, as this shakes the unity of the Palestinian house. Factual information must be given about events once they occur.

5) The official position must be same as the people's position when it comes to any Israeli policies or

measures taken against Palestinian land — confiscation, closure, settlement — or people — killing, arresting, expelling, house demolition, closure — which destroy any credibility for any hope for co-existence.

6) Work for the success of the commitments of the PNA and refusal to embarrass it with certain positions or internal or external actions. The aim is to maintain the PNA as the sole national authority.

7) All competent and qualified Palestinians should be allowed to participate in building the new Palestinian society according to the principles of law, justice and equality.

Palestinian Affairs: Former Hamas Leader Mediating Reconciliation Talks Bid

NC2603095696 Paris AFP in English 0900 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Gaza City, March 26 (AFP)—Yasir 'Arafat and jailed leaders of the radical Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad movements have tentatively agreed to hold reconciliation talks, a deputy in the Palestinian council said Tuesday [26 March].

Imad Faluji, a former Hamas leader who broke with the movement to run for a seat in the self-rule legislative council, said he met separately late Monday with the Palestinian president and the jailed militants and obtained all parties' "preliminary" approval for talks.

"The proposal was to resume a dialogue between all parties and all parties have agreed without conditions," he told AFP. Faluji said he met in Gaza City jail with Hamas political leaders Mahmud Zahhar, Sayyid Abu-Musamah and Ahmad Bahr and Islamic Jihad figures 'Abdallah Shami and Muhammad al-Hindi.

"I told them President 'Arafat had agreed tentatively to resume a dialogue and had given me a green light to do that," he said.

"I met with 'Arafat afterwards and transmitted the opposition's point of view and 'Arafat welcomed this step," he said, adding he would meet again Tuesday with the Islamic leaders to present 'Arafat's position. 'Arafat's office had no immediate comment on the contacts. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: 'Urayqat Says PA Rejects Sharm al-Shaykh Follow-Up Agenda

NC2603105596 Paris AFP in English 0956 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jericho, West Bank, March 26 (AFP)—The chief Palestinian delegate to this week's follow-up meeting in Washington to the Sharm al-Shaykh summit protested Tuesday [26 March] over the agenda's sole focus on fighting terrorism.

"The Americans have presented us with an agenda including only one point, confronting terrorism, and this goes against the recommendations of the Sharm al-Shaykh conference," said Sa'ib 'Urayqat, acting local government minister in Yasir 'Arafat's Palestinian Authority.

"The Palestinian Authority [PA] rejects this agenda, it does not constitute a starter for the talks," 'Urayqat told AFP.

Representatives of 30 nations are due to attend Thursday's meeting in Washington to discuss implementation of recommendations made at the March 13 summit organized in Sharm al-Shaykh, on Egypt's Sinai peninsula, after the recent spate of Islamic suicide bombings in Israel.

The summit pledged to launch a global campaign against terrorism and to work to salvage the Middle East peace process.

"The Sharm al-Shaykh declaration had four points, and confronting terrorism was only one of them," 'Urayqat said, adding that he had discussed the Palestinian complaints with the US consul-general in Jerusalem, Edward Abington.

'Urayqat said the Palestinians had proposed their own agenda, including demands that Israel lift the closure of the Palestinian territories imposed after the suicide attacks.

The agenda also demanded that Israel halt punitive measures against Palestinians "and return to the negotiating table" to pursue implementation of peace agreements, notably the withdrawal from the West Bank city of Hebron scheduled for later this week.

"We are also asking for immediate aid for the Palestinian people" to help cope with the closure, he said. The Palestinian Authority says the blockade prevents more than 60,000 Palestinians from reaching jobs in Israel and has choked trade to a trickle at a daily cost of some six million dollars.

Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on "Peres has declared war on violence and terrorism, but in practical terms he did it against the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian people," 'Urayqat said. "The Israeli policies will only lead to expanding the cycle of violence ... we are facing a real disaster on the ground," he said.

"Thursday's meeting must deal with supporting peace and security, including Palestinian security, and with the urgent needs of the Palestinian people while also pursuing other tracks of the Israeli-Arab peace process and confronting terrorism," he said.

'Urayqat said the Palestinians had obtained strong international support for their position, notably from the Europeans and Canada.

A spokesman for the US consulate said Washington's view is that fighting terrorism is a sufficient goal for Thursday's meeting and that the real problems facing the Palestinians were best dealt with through the international donors' network. 'Urayqat's delegation to Washington will include the head of Palestinian intelligence services Amin al-Hindi, 'Arafat adviser Marwan Kanafani and the PLO representative in Washington, Hasan 'Abd-al Rahman.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Ashrawi Ready To Sign Affidavit for Musa Abu-Marzuq

NC2603090796 Paris AFP in English
0738 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jerusalem, March 26 (AFP)—A senior Palestinian figure Hanan 'Ashrawi said Tuesday [26 March] she would submit an affidavit for use by a Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] leader battling Israeli efforts to extradite him from the United States.

'Ashrawi, a member of the newly elected Palestinian legislative council, said she had accepted a defense request to submit the affidavit for the extradition hearing of Musa Abu-Marzuq, a top Hamas leader wanted by Israel on terrorism charges.

The affidavit "will deal with the fact that Hamas is not all militant and you cannot lump everyone under the same heading," 'Ashrawi told AFP.

"I do not know Abu-Marzuq," 'Ashrawi said." This is an affidavit of a political nature."

The extradition hearing is due to open Tuesday in New York. Abu-Marzuq was detained for violating US immigration law.

Israeli documents obtained by US authorities allege that Abu-Marzuq is the top leader of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) rather than simply its political chief as he claims. Abu-Marzuq has denied any involvement with terrorism.

Hamas has claimed responsibility for a series of suicide bombings in Israel and is currently the target of an unprecedented crackdown by Israeli and Palestinian police in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Arab-Israeli Talks

Arab-Israeli Talks: IDF, PA Officials Discuss Closure, War on Terror

TA2603084696 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 26 Mar 96 pp 1, 2

[Report by Arieh O'Sullivan]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Maj.-Gen. Oren Shahor, the government coordinator in the territories, complained to the Palestinian Authority [PA] in Gaza yesterday that it is not following through with agreed upon steps that would help ease the closure.

Specifically, PA officials seemingly ignored Israeli approval for reactivating a loading station at the Erez crossing which would allow raw materials, such as gravel and cement, in to supply Gaza's crippled construction industry, said Shlomo Dror, Shahor's spokesman.

They also did not follow through with agreements to improve security arrangements at the Qarni crossing, such as erecting fences, increasing guards, and reducing loads so they could be more easily checked sizes, Dror said. [sentence as published]

The Dizengoff suicide bomber succeeded in slipping through the crossing and, under the strict security restrictions now in place, less than 40 trucks a day have been able to use it, Dror noted.

He said Shahor has repeatedly stressed to the Palestinians that Israel wants to ease the closure as much as possible, without compromising its security. "But we feel that the PA is not ready to advance steps to ease the closure," Dror said.

Meanwhile, IDF [Israel Defense Forces] officers told their Palestinian counterparts that the closure would not be eased unless they get serious in the war against Islamic militants.

For the first time in four weeks, top IDF commanders in Judaea and Samaria held a meeting with Gen. al-Hajj Isma'il Jabir, the head of the West Bank Palestinian Police, and other Palestinian officers.

"The meeting was on the topic of terror and the fight against it. Gen. al-Hajj Isma'il got up and declared, and you could see it in his countenance, an all-out war against terror to give themselves security and peace," OC Judaea and Samaria Maj.-Gen. Gabi Ofir said following the meeting.

The Palestinians sought an easing of the closure and a cessation of house demolitions, which it labeled collective punishment. So far, Palestinian security forces have rounded up some 900 suspected Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad members since the wave of suicide bombings.

"I declared before the PA and the officers of Judaea and Samaria that the continuation of the war is a shared one. As long as the murderers are not behind bars and there is no tranquility, then things can't be the way they were," Ofir said. "I tend to believe that they are doing the best they are capable of."

Algeria

Algeria: Article Details Factions Split From GIA Leadership

MM2503152696 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 23 Mar 96 pp 1, 6

[Report by Kamil al-Tawil in London: "Algeria: Mekhloufi's Split From 'Islamic Group' Confirmed"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The AL-ANFAL bulletin, close to a wing of the Armed Islamic Group [GIA] which broke away from its leader Abou-Abderrahmane Amin (Djemal Zitouni), confirmed yesterday that Shaykh Said Mekhloufi, the Islamic State Movement leader, has split from the GIA.

In its issue distributed in London yesterday, of which AL-HAYAH has obtained a copy, AL-ANFAL reissued a statement by Mekhloufi announcing the split from the leadership of the GIA, which he joined in May 1994. AL-HAYAH published the statement last month but was unable to confirm it. However, the AL-ANSAR bulletin, close to Zitouni's GIA wing, later denied it. In yesterday's issue the AL-ANFAL bulletin, linked to those who broke away from the current GIA amir, said that "it did not want to comment on (Mekhloufi's statement in AL-HAYAH) because it did not have any confirmation from the mujahidin in the land of jihad. After ascertaining its authenticity, we will publish it in its entirety" (and reissued the statement), deriding AL-ANSAR's denial of the statement's authenticity.

It is a known fact that those in charge of AL-ANFAL previously used to publish AL-ANSAR. However, the fact that the GIA has claimed responsibility for the assassination of Shaykhs Mohamed Said, Abderrazak Radjam, and some former Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] leaders, caused a disagreement and a split between the two groups. AL-ANSAR continued issuing reports from Algeria quoting Zitouni's supporters, while AL-ANFAL published reports from groups opposed to him.

In yesterday's issue AL-ANFAL reported on many armed groups leaving the GIA under Zitouni's leadership. It said that among the groups which broke away there is "the Death Battalion" [katibah al-mawt] (led by "Amir 'Ukasha" in Tiaret 300 km west of Algiers); the "Soldiers of God Battalion" [katibah jund-allah] (led by "Amir Nur-al-Din" in Relizane, 280 km west of the capital); the "Sunnah Battalion" [katibah al-sunnah] (led by Amir Bou Allam in Ain Defla, 120 km west of the capital). It also mentioned "similar moves by the mujahidin" in Khemis Miliana (100 km west of the capital), Bou Saada (200 km south of Algiers), Qumar [name as transliterated] (the city of Dar Souf, 700 km southeast of the capital), Yumna and Sarah [names as transliterated] (350 km south of the capital), and Theniet El Had (100 km west of the capital).

The bulletin also said that that the groups which are still loyal to Zitouni have become very weak, in particular those around the capital. It said that "the Martyrs Battalion" [katibah al-shuhada'], west of the capital, "is very small, and suffers from bad organization and a shortage of personnel and equipment." Its amir, "al-Mahi," [name as transliterated] recently fell in an ambush, and Husayn Falishah [name as transliterated] (from al-Kasbah) took over as interim leader. AL-ANFAL said that the "the Strangers Battalion" [katibah al-ghuraba'] is a new group formed by Zitouni loyalists to hit the "Sacrifice Battalion" [katibah al-fida'] (opposed to him). It said that the amir of "the Strangers Battalion" is Said Azazfa [surname as transliterated] (also known as "Faris") who is responsible for luring (the GIA's former amir) Abu-Khalil Mahfuz [name as transliterated]... into an ambush intended to eliminate him.

The bulletin also mentioned that the "Conquest Battalion" [katibah al-fath] in the Boufarik region suffered major losses at the hands of the militias and lost one of its officials called Antar Zawabri [name as transliterated]. It said that the "Truth Battalion" [katibah al-haqq] in Bougara is Zitouni's main headquarters and is "a battalion beyond redemption." It mentioned the "Khalid Ibn-al-Walid Battalion" in Blida (there was a recent assassination attempt on its amir) and "the Revenge Battalion" [katibah al-intiqam] in Medea (the battalion's base of ordinary worshippers in the mosques and its leadership are still loyal to Zitouni).

AL-ANFAL also stressed that the GIA's amir west of Algiers Abu 'Abd-al-Rahim Khalid (amir of the Defenders of al-Salafiyah [reformist movement]) has disavowed the leadership of the GIA under Zitouni's banner. AL-ANSAR recently said that the GIA's leadership is besieging him and asking him to give himself up to stand trial. It also said that the disagreement with him is due to "administrative" reasons.

Algeria: Officials Charged With Embezzlement

LD2503211096 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A statement was issued this evening by the Interior Ministry. It has said that within the framework of the judicial investigation open before Boufarik Court, the former director of Mitidja Markets Enterprise and the former director-general of the company running the tourist centre Club des Pins, who has been remanded into custody, have been charged with embezzlement and deliberate wasting of public money. The acts related to him have been committed when he was director general of Mitidja Markers Enterprise. The public lawsuit in this case was filed in June 1995.

Algeria: Ministry Suspends Weekly for Justifying Terrorism

LD2603100096 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] For the second week running, the Algiers printing company has refused to print the weekly LA NATION in line with the rules and regulations that are in force.

The Ministry of Interior, Local Authorities, and Environment has issued a statement saying that the publication was planning to publish a commentary in this week's issue which had been scheduled for the previous issue.

The Ministry of Interior's statement said the commentary combines a justification of terrorist crimes with contempt for the people who are risking their lives in the struggle against terrorism; this cannot be allowed in Algeria or anywhere else.

According to the statement, the weekly has displayed a will to deliberately provoke and undermine the authority of the law.

The statement added that such behavior is not acceptable, because freedom of expression cannot be separated from the freedom which those people whom the weekly LA NATION is trying to help are trying to stifle.

Egypt

Egypt: Mubarak Receives al-Qadhdhafi Envoy

NC2503132596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1215 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 25 Mar (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak received Mustafa al-Kharrubi, envoy of Libyan revolution leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, at the Presidential Palace this afternoon. Also attending the meeting were Faraj al-Sa'iti, coordinator of Egyptian-Libyan relations, and Ahmad Bin-Khayyal and Hasan al-Shawish, members of the Libyan delegation.

Egypt: Mubarak Receives Message From Libya's al-Qadhdhafi

NC2503151396 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1440 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 25 Mar (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has received a message from Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution. It was delivered by al-Qadhdhafi's envoy Mustafa al-Kharrubi, who was received by President Mubarak today.

Faraj al-Sa'iti, coordinator of Egyptian-Libyan relations, said that the message dealt with a number of regional and international issues. He added that al-Kharrubi's mission comes in the context of ongoing consultations between President Mubarak and Col. al-Qadhdhafi on bilateral, regional, and international issues of mutual interest.

Egypt: Musa on Summit, Israeli Measures, Ties to Southeast Asia

NC2503172896 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1315 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 25 Mar (MENA) — Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stated that the Egyptian delegation to the meetings of the follow-up committee of the Sharm al-Shaykh international summit of peacemakers, which will convene in Washington on Thursday [28 March], has been formed by Egyptian ambassador in Washington Ahmad Mahir. The delegation includes a group of specialists on all topics relating to the Sharm al-Shaykh summit resolutions.

In a statement to President Husni Mubarak's audiences today, Musa said that there is an Egyptian-Palestinian coordination on these meetings and that Egypt's stance is definite regarding implementation of the summit resolutions. He noted that the Sharm al-Shaykh summit addressed the framework of the peace process and the need to bolster and continue the peace process so that both the Palestinian and Israeli parties may benefit from it. He said that since Israel has been supported financially to confront violence, The Palestinian Authority must also be supported to confront the economic circumstances. The poor and difficult economic situation besetting the self-rule areas as a result of the closure and siege must also be taken into consideration.

Musa said that continuation of the siege and closure of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip will lead to frustration and increased acts of violence. He stressed that the Israeli measures and practices against the Palestinians may lead to violence as a result of economic and political frustration due to suspending implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement or continuing the siege imposed on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

He pointed out that a date for the meeting of the foreign ministers of the peacemakers summit will be determined during the follow-up committee members' meetings scheduled to convene in Washington on Thursday.

Musa stressed that his latest Asian tour achieved its goals and produced extremely positive results. He said that this tour is the beginning of getting acquainted and dealing with the Asian tigers. He said that during his tour, Egypt's economic potential and all measures to remove hurdles taken by the Egyptian government recently were explained to these countries in order to open the door for investment. The Egyptian delegation also explained that Egypt has great potential to assimilate investments and that it has a desire to increase economic cooperation and trade exchange with these countries.

He said that an agreement has been reached with Korea on a specific plan and that several economic cooperation agreements were signed, including one which would increasing Korean investment in Egypt to $1 billion in two years. Agreement was also reached on measures to achieve equilibrium in the trade balance because it is in Korea's favor and to increase trade exchange and the number of Korean tourists to Egypt to 1 million per year.

Musa said that political ties with Malaysia are good, but there are no economic relations between the two countries. He noted that Malaysia exports $74 billion worth of commodities abroad annually and imports $78 billion worth and that Egypt scarcely has any share in Malaysia's imports. He said that businessmen and investors in these countries made observations on the bureaucratic obstacles that impede investment and exports to and imports from Egypt. He noted that the Egyptian delegation explained to officials in these countries Egypt's recent measures to remove these hurdles. Musa said that the delegation also explained Egypt's economic resources and the possibilities for exports, imports, and investments to open the door for joint cooperation in view of the fact that current cooperation between the two countries is extremely meager.

Egypt: Cairo Concerned About Risks From Israel's Nuclear Reactor

NC2603071696 Cairo MENA in English
2225 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, March 25 (MENA)—Egyptian concern about reports on nuclear disaster "risks" pertaining to Israeli "Dimona" reactor is voiced here by a top ranking Foreign Ministry official.

Tomorrow's AL-AHRAM, a Cairo Arabic-language daily, quotes First Foreign Under Secretary Muhammad 'Adil al-Safti exclusively in a front page item showing Egypt as following up with extreme concern and interest the reported Dimona reactor nuclear disaster risks in the Negev Desert as well as the reportedly detected radioactive leak in the area near the reactor.

According to al-Safti, Egypt is following up this topic on a very active basis and will not let it calm down or pass without securing decisive solution. He was apparently commenting on a Israeli television report on risks resulting from the reactor.

Egypt: Commentary Says Israeli Military Strikes Counterproductive

NC2503152996 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 25 Mar 96

[Commentary by Muhammad al-Sa'id Fa'iq: "A Comprehensive and Just Peace Is the Right Path to Regional Security and Stability"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Middle East is again in a state of anxious expectancy as some Israeli political and military leaders make dire threats to carry out extensive military strikes against south Lebanon, in retaliation for an individual operation carried out by a Hizballah member against an Israeli patrol.

These statements become more and more hardline and extreme as Israeli politicians try to win hardline voters in the next elections. As the threats to the Lebanese resistance increase and Israeli election posturing escalates, there are fresh fears that the region will again be an arena of violence and counter violence to the detriment of the nascent Middle East peace. [passage omitted]

If the Israeli leaders really wish to consolidate peace and security, they must search out the real causes of anxiety and violence besetting the region and the real motives for the suicide operations carried out by Palestinian youths, who have despaired of having a good life under occupation and have seen their dreams of a better future shattered.

Only a comprehensive peace, based on justice that is acceptable to the two sides and that safeguards the dignity and rights of both parties, can ensure regional security and stability. It is the condition that must be met before the way can be paved to peaceful coexistence in the Middle East. Only then can the roots of violence and hatred, fuelled by decades of Arab-Israeli wars and conflicts, be exterminated. [passage omitted]

Violence produces nothing except more violence. Threatening military strikes that will scorch the very ground in south Lebanon will only make things worse. It will not ensure security and stability regardless of the Israeli war machine's claim that it can produce security by destroying the infrastructure of the Lebanese resistance. [passage omitted]

Egypt: World Bank Willing To Finance More Projects

NC2503150596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1215 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Luxor, 25 Mar (MENA) — World Bank President James Wolfensohn stated that the bank is willing to finance more productive projects in Egypt and that he will discuss this during his meeting with President Husni Mubarak and ministers.

In an exclusive statement, Wolfensohn told MENA's International Economic Bulletin that the relationship between Egypt and the World Bank is at its best and that there are no problems between the two. He pointed out that the misunderstanding that occurred between the bank and Egypt in the past was due to the bank's reevaluation of its contributions to projects all over the world and that Egypt had no hand in that. Normalcy has been restored now, and we fully understand each other, he said.

Wolfensohn added that he is visiting Egypt to hear President Mubarak's and the ministers' views on new projects and Egypt's economic plan. He said that the bank is willing to be Egypt's partner.

Asked about the privatization policy in Egypt, the World Bank president said that the private sector in most countries is achieving considerable success because it is more efficient than the public sector. He noted that he will be briefed by Egyptian officials on the steps being taken in that direction.

He remarked that the privatization steps Egypt has taken have been positive, and he hopes this success will continue.

Wolfensohn said that the World Bank hopes to allocate considerable amounts of money — he did not specify how much — to projects in Egypt, either directly from the bank or through the social development fund that it has backed since 1991. [passage omitted]

Egypt: World Bank Head Discusses Country's Economy, Growth

NC2603114896 Cairo MENA in English 1045 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Mar 26 (MENA)—President of the World Bank James Wolfensohn today expressed his full confidence in Egypt's ability to tackle issues related to economy, economic reform, and development.

In an exclusive interview with MENA, Wolfensohn pointed to the weight of Egypt in the Mideast region and said its position cannot be ignored by foreign investors, especially as Egypt represents a stable community that comprises a huge manpower.

He further said that he came to Egypt in order to directly get acquainted with the economic situation here.

The president of the World Bank said there is a good opportunity for Egypt to enter new markets and to win over international organisations and institutions that could help it in its development process.

Despite the fact the rate of the population growth is increasing against the rate of economic development, yet the Egyptian Government is trying to make up for the difference and seeks to bring the growth rate to some seven percent he said.

It is of highest importance to provide security, stability, and confidence for both foreign and local investors, he said.

National investments are important besides trying to lure foreign ones he added.

Egypt: Criminal Extradition Agreement Signed With Cyprus

NC2503174996 Cairo MENA in English 1609 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Mar 25 (MENA)—Egypt and Cyprus today signed an agreement on the extradition of criminals.

Minister of Justice Faruq Sayf-al-Nasr together with Cypriot Minister of Justice and Public Order Alekos [Alexandros] Evangelou signed the agreement. The newly signed agreement calls for handing over criminals and those who are sentenced to not less than a year in prison according to the laws of the two countries. According to the agreement, terrorist crimes are not considered political and thus extradition of terrorists is included in this accord. The agreement is to be applied to crimes which were committed prior to the signing.

Egypt: Mubarak, Hungary's Goncz Hold Talks in Cairo

NC2503195696 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Husni Mubarak and Hungarian President Arpad Goncz held a private round of talks at the Presidential Palace this evening, continuing their earlier discussions that began this morning.

The two presidents discussed ways of promoting bilateral ties, explored the prospects of Egyptian-Hungarian economic cooperation, and reviewed the situation in the Middle East, East European, and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

They also touched on several regional and international issues of mutual interest.

Following the conclusion of these talks, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said that they dealt with bilateral relations, the peace process, and also the situation in Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Middle East. They also focused on Egyptian-Hungarian economic and commercial ties and viewed ways of encouraging investments.

'Amr Musa said he hopes that the ties between the two countries will be enhanced in all spheres.

He added that members of the Egyptian and Hungarian delegations held a session of talks on the sidelines of the Egyptian-Hungarian summit and that businessmen from both countries also met and held talks.

Musa reported that Presidents Mubarak and Goncz will hold a round of talks tomorrow to continue discussing the issues they raised today. He noted that the two countries will sign two scientific and economic agreements.

President Mubarak hosted a dinner banquet in honor of President Goncz and his delegation. It was attended by senior government officials.

President Mubarak and the Hungarian president met this morning after the latter arrived in Cairo. They discussed regional and international issues of mutual interest.

President Mubarak and President Arpad Goncz will hold a news conference at the conclusion of their talks tomorrow.

President Goncz and his delegation arrived in Cairo this morning for a three-day official visit to Egypt. The Hungarian president is accompanied by the ministers of interior, trade, and cooperation, and the deputy ministers of foreign affairs, agriculture, and education, and several businessmen.

Libya

Libya: Officer in U.S. Said 'Behind' Coup Attempt

NC2503183096 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Mystery continues to surround the clashes that have occurred in Libya. Although both the Libyan Government and the Libyan opposition have confirmed that clashes have taken place, they have given different versions of these incidents.

The Libyan authorities confirmed today that people have been killed in clashes, which they claimed occurred between police and drug merchants backed by Israel.

The Libyan opposition, however, has spoken of clashes between the Libyan authorities and extremist groups. Libyan travelers arriving in Egypt said that 26 people were killed in a coup attempt, behind which stands a Libyan officer who is in the opposition and is now in the United States.

Reports about the disturbances that have plagued eastern Libya for the past few days are conflicting. While official sources in Tripoli say that the security forces have succeeded in uncovering a drug merchants' ring and killed some of its members, Libyan travelers arriving in Egypt have spoken of an uprising seeking to overthrow the regime. They say an opposition figure called Colonel Khalifah Hattar, who uses the United States as a base for his group, is behind the attempt.

A group of prisoners escaped from a jail near Banghazi last Thursday [21 March] and sought refuge in Dirna in the east, where they clashed with Libyan security forces. Several people on both sides died in the fighting.

According to eyewitnesses, there are armed groups in the mountainous areas in eastern Libya who oppose President [title as heard] Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi's regime. These eyewitnesses say it is likely that opposition figures living in exile have returned to the country to join these armed groups.

Libya: Minister Denies Building of Chemical Weapons Plant

NC2503144696 Paris AFP in English 1402 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli, March 25 (AFP)—Libya denied Monday [25 March] that it was building a huge underground chemical weapons plant as claimed by the CIA, saying the charges were lies aimed at impeding Arab technological progress.

Libya's information minister, Fawziyah Shallabi, told AFP that the United States' Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has "long made up lies as part of its hostile plots against Libya."

"The lies by the CIA aimed at preventing this so-called factory are part of an American decision to prevent Arabs, and Libya in particular, from obtaining modern technology in industry," Shallabi said.

"The American objective is to prevent industrial and economic development programs in Libya, which are aimed at achieving the country's economic independence and break its subordination to the West," she said.

The United States is waging a clandestine campaign to prevent Libya from completing the world's largest underground chemical weapons plant, the US weekly Time Magazine reported Sunday.

Time said the CIA had been working for the past four years to disrupt the plant's construction, with some success.

The CIA used satellite photos and information from spies to produce a computer model that showed a massive underground chamber, almost three stories high, the magazine said.

The new plant is similar to the al-Rabitah facility, which was started in 1989, and was closed after an international campaign led by Washington, Time said.

But the Libyan minister also raised the allegations against the al-Rabitah plant, which was inaugurated in 1995, saying it "recently started to export pharmaceutical products to Egypt."

US officials told Time the al-Rabitah facility produced about 100 tonnes of mustard gas and nerve agents that still could be used by terrorists.

CIA operatives have sought to disrupt deliveries from a clandestine network set up by Tripoli to smuggle in workers and equipment to the plant, which is protected by a mountain and impenetrable to any type of attack except from a nuclear warhead, Time said.

Last month CIA director John Deutch said Libya was working on what he termed the world's largest underground chemical weapons plant.

Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi described the work as part of an irrigation system, according to the New York Times. The Libyan ambassador to Cairo denied in February the existence of any chemical arms plant in Libya.

Libya: Al-Qadhdhafi, Russia's Davydov Condemn U.S. 'Aggression'

LD2503184196 Tripoli JANA in English
1813 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli, Al Rabia 25 [25 March], JAMAHIRIYAH News Agency — Oleg Davidoff the deputy prime minister in the Russian Republic, and the accompanying delegation, made a visit today to the residence of the leader of the revolution [Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi] during which they witnessed the effects of the foiled American NATO barbaric aggression on the Great Jamahiriyah.

The deputy Russian prime minister condemned the foiled barbaric aggression. He said in a comment in the visitors book that the Russian delegation condemns this savage and terrorist aggression. He added that we are with the Libyan Arab people under the leadership of Col. Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi.

Sudan

Sudan: Airplane Hijackers Seek Political Asylum in Eritrea

AB2503155796 Paris AFP in French
1449 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Dubai, 25 Mar (AFP) — The Sudanese hijackers, who hijacked a Sudan Airways aircraft to Asmara yesterday, are members of the security services and have requested political asylum in Eritrea, the Eritrean Embassy in the UAE announced today.

"The two hijackers are Jaafar Ibrahim Hassan and Ezzedine Hassan. They are members of the Sudanese security services and have demanded political asylum in Eritrea," the embassy stated in a communique.

"They are still at the disposal of the competent authorities of the Eritrean Ministry of Interior which is carrying out an investigation on them," the embassy added, explaining that the two hijackers are "young men" but has not given their ages.

The embassy also indicated that the Airbus A-320 aircraft, which was hijacked, returned to Sudan today with 40 passengers and the seven-member crew. "They are in good health in view of the good care and warm welcome accorded them by Asmara," the embassy added.

Sudan: Government Seeks Extradition of Hijackers in Eritrea

AB2503192296 Paris AFP in English
1913 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Khartoum, March 25 (AFP) — Sudan said on Monday [25 March] it would demand extradition of two Sudanese security officials who asked Eritrea for political asylum after hijacking an airliner to Asmara. [passage omitted]

Civil Aviation Minister al-Tigani Adam al-Tahir told journalists at the airport that the Sudanese Government would "demand from Eritrea the extradition of the hijackers in accordance with international law."

"Security measures are tight at Khartoum airport and investigations will be made to know how the incident took place," Airport Director Kamal Eddin Yagub Bilil said, quoted by the state news agency SUNA.

The two hijackers were named as Jaafar Ibrahim Hassan and Ezzedin Hassan, members of the Sudanese security services. [passage omitted]

The flight's pilot Beshir Ali Beshir said that 20 minutes after take-off from Khartoum airport "a person armed with a big pistol forced his way into the cabin and ordered the plane change its flight to Asmara."

"Another man stood at the door of the cabin. For the safety of passengers and aircraft, I complied with their orders," Beshir told journalists at Khartoum airport.

In Asmara, "a number of Sudanese opposition leaders paid visits to the passengers and the crew members," he said. [passage omitted]

Sudan: SUNA Reports Return of Hijacked Plane to Khartoum

EA2503211496 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1720 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Khartoum, 25th March: The Sudan Airways plane that was hijacked to Asmara yesterday returned to the homeland this afternoon with all the passengers and crew members on board except the two hijackers.

Upon arrival at Khartoum airport, the plane was received by Major General (retd) al-Tijani Adam al-Tahir, the minister of aviation and survey, and the minister of culture and information, Mr. 'Abd-al-Basit Sabdarat, and other top officials.

The captain of the plane, Bashir ali Bashir, announced that all the passengers had returned safely. He said the hijackers had stormed the captain's cabin 20 minutes after take off and one of them pointed a pistol at him and forced him to head for Asmara instead of Port Sudan-Jeddah, while his accomplice stood at the entrance to the captain's cabin. The captain said he responded to the hijackers' threats out of concern for the passengers' safety.

He said the plane spent 20 minutes circling over Asmara before the Eritrean authorities permitted it to land. He said the hijackers gave themselves up as soon as the plane landed, and requested political asylum.

He said the passengers and crew members of the plane were well treated and were allowed to contact their relatives in Abu-Dhabi and Saudi Arabia to reassure them about their situation.

The minister of aviation and survey and the director of Khartoum airport announced that security would be tightened in regard to domestic and international flights so that a similar incident does not happen again.

It was reported that the plane's two hijackers were from northern state and that one was 28-years-old while the other was [word indistinct].

Sudan: Eritrea Detains 3 Iranian Passengers From Hijacked Plane

NC2603083296 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0705 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Khartoum, 26 Mar (MENA)—The nongovernmental Sudanese newspaper AL-RA'Y AL-AKHAR has revealed that the Eritrean authorities detained three Iranian passengers flying on the Sudanese plane hijacked the day before yesterday. The plane returned to Khartoum yesterday.

The paper adds that approximately 10 foreigners were aboard the plane, including the three Iranians, a Jordanian, and the manager of Shell in South Africa [nationality not specified].

A high-ranking Sudanese Foreign Ministry source has stated that Sudan will ask the Eritrean Government to return the three Iranian passengers to Khartoum immediately. The source pointed out that such detention is banned by international laws as well as the rules and regulations of the IATA [International Air Traffic Association].

Two Sudanese oppositionists hijacked the plane the day before yesterday while it was on a regular flight from Khartoum to Jeddah via Port Sudan and forced it to land in Asmara, where they gave themselves up to the authorities.

Sudan: Al-Turabi on Election Victory, Role of Islam

MM2503152896 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 21 Mar 96 p 16

[Interview with Dr. Hasan 'Abdallah al-Turabi, secretary general of the Islamic People's Congress, by Imam Ahmad Imam in Khartoum; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Imam] What does your victory in the elections to the federal National Assembly mean?

[Al-Turabi] Our political ethics do not permit us to gloat over and rejoice at our victory. Membership of the Assembly is in fact a trust laid upon one's shoulders to make a contribution to the council of deputies. The federal regime in a country like Sudan seeks to draw up its own constitution through referendums, to crystallize its model of political, economic, and social systems, to consolidate national unity, and to actively play its role in the world.

[Imam] Will you accept nomination for the chairmanship of the federal National Assembly?

[Al-Turabi] If I am pressed by the brother deputies to assume chairmanship of the Assembly's sessions, then I may accept such a trust. However, I can perform my role in the Assembly in any position whatsoever, be it as chairman of the Assembly, as a committee chairman, or as a member of the Assembly.

I confess that a number of my brother colleagues and my students in the field of law, who are now in authority, have raised with me the question of contributing to the work of the Assembly with my legal experience in the fields of local government systems, the development of federal rule, and constitutional decree No. 13 which laid down the executive and legislative system in the country and introduced various models of other constitutional systems.

[Imam] Why did you reject nomination for the presidency of the republic and accept nomination for membership of the federal National Assembly in the geographical constituencies elections?

[Al-Turabi] It has become a novelty in the Sudanese political arena these days that no one, however qualified, will nominate himself, even though deep in his heart he would like to be in the Assembly so that he could express his views, which nobody else would express for him. As far as I am concerned, I am not like that. I do not say I am too old, but in view of the population structure and ages of people in Sudan, I feel that now that I am over 60, there are many generations who could play their part. For this reason, I am not keen on assuming any executive post. But due to pressure from some citizens, who asked me to contribute my political and legal views and experience to the enrichment of public life in Sudan by joining the Assembly where the various views of the Sudanese people's representatives from all parts of Sudan interact, I agreed in response to their wishes to participate in the parliamentary elections. Furthermore, I accepted nomination for the parliament so that I can contribute my views openly from a public platform which the entire public opinion watches, and also so as to participate in a historical change, renovation, and cultural revival plan that concerns not Sudan alone but the entire Islamic world on the basis that it is a distinguished and serious attempt to restore the relationship between religion and politics without infringing public freedoms.

The Islamic movement in Sudan has excelled many Islamic movements. Its membership has grown and it has opened up to the elderly, young people, and women of Sudan. Its objectives in life have also grown in terms of faith, rites, and worship. It has also returned politics to the sphere of religion and returned culture, art, and science to religion so that it becomes a cultural religion, so embracing all aspects of life. I would say that religious manifestations are now evident in all walks of life in Sudan. For this reason, it is necessary to actively participate in turning all this into an asset for Sudan's cultural development plan as well as in plans for construction and development of conditions in various fields through bestowing a touch of religion on all things. This is a cultural movement whose manifestations will be reflected in all aspects of life in Sudan.

[Imam] The elections have resulted in the victory of the candidates of the National Islamic Front, which indicates the absence of other political currents. What would you say about that?

[Al-Turabi] A large number of representatives of Islamic forces have won seats in the National Assembly elections, and this indicates Sudan's emergence in the world and its occupation of a place among the community of nations. The currents that are absent were either currents that refused to accept the challenge and consequently did not contest the elections or put themselves to the test by the people, or their representatives did not achieve victory as the Islamic forces representatives have done. This, however, does not mean that there are no forces other than Islamic forces in the Assembly. The Assembly is a large receptacle that contains representatives of all the national forces chosen by the people in direct and free elections.

[Imam] Some say that the Sudanese Islamic experiment in power has failed as it did not bring about the desired Islamic change in society's movement... What is your evaluation of this experiment's development during the past six years?

[Al-Turabi] Firstly, it is the wisdom of the Sudanese people to realize that this was not the picture of a political change, but is to be found in a comprehensive movement of life and Islam. On the level of development and movements which act in the name of the revolution, it is so. But on the road of social change its effects can be seen in political, social, and economic life as well as in the specific conditions of the country concerned. And this is what lies behind individual features. It seems that some people present this movement as though it was one of an entire society irrespective of how some people try to express or lead aspects of life or instigate its tributaries to tackle Islamic change in Sudan.

Quite often, revolutions drive campaigns that are aimed at changing the old, toward something more closely approaching the destruction of the wrong. So if changes take place that bring a substitute for it in life, it is forced to resort to force or keep returning until it possesses the constants for revolutionary change, in other words, the comprehensive change of all walks of life, and change for advancement. I do not say that it advances regularly in life. But whatever comes to you from life, you look at it. Furthermore, it moves in tandem with movement toward other aspects.

Some people see nothing other than a historical dimension in what is before them. When they move away from it, though, they soon realize that the historical aspect has henceforth disappeared. Some people are attracted by daily events. But this is what happens in Sudan. [preceding three paragraphs are as published]

New events are taking place that fall within the framework of a social change movement in Sudan. In view of this, we are not in a hurry about bringing about an Islamic change in the Sudanese people's movement but rather are anxious that this change should come gently and gradually and should cover all sectors of society.

[Imam] You are being accused of trying to repeat or copy the Khomeyni-ite experience of Iran in Sudan. It is also being said that you continue to be influenced by the Khomeyni-ite complex and aspire to be the Khomeyni of Sudan. How do you reply to these charges?

[Al-Turabi] It is true that the Khomeyni revolution in Iran is a movement of religious strife and Islam in a country that was dominated by people who wanted Iran to be guided in its march by the ancient Persian tradition and modern European methods. They wanted to borrow from the pre-Islamic era that reigned in Persia. This led to the rise of a religious tendency. What happened in Iran was a revolution by any standards. It was a revolution that affected all parts of the world, because people knew that it was connected with principles and slogans. Even after its triumph it will remain for a long time to come, reacting with these slogans and principles, though it might not tailor these principles and slogans to methods and programs in the field of real life. This provides a clear difference between the movement in Sudan and the movement in Iran, for anyone capable of discerning.

Secondly, the Iranian movement, naturally, took place in a Persian country and a Persian environment. Even in matters of religion, the Iranian revolution adopted the way of one specific sect, Shiism. For this reason, it sought to protect itself within Tehran and from there to spread its influence and extend its arms to outside. But by its nature Sudan is open and does not get excited over any bigotry on behalf of any creed or sect. Sudan is not motivated by any national or regional fanaticism, as it has a more secular outlook.

Thirdly, the Islamic movement in Iran was more besieged due to the blackout that was imposed on it and its remoteness from the sources vested in men of religion bearing all sorts of religious titles, who were the ones that liberated all aspects of life in their country.

But as to Sudan, it is an open country and belongs to the faction that concentrated on developing its own internal organization; consequently it was only natural to include leaderships that did not attempt to monopolize the movement's initiatives but rather interacted with all the other various aspects. As I have said, Sudan is too big for Islam to ignore.

Furthermore, the political field in Sudan is wide whether in terms of the system of government, the relationship between the subjects and the rulers, or the relations that exist in a country with such a multitude of origins.

The same applies to the economic field. Sudan was a backward, lost, and hungry country, yet it followed economic systems which embodied some fairness in economic relations among the people.

In Sudan, change is taking place in the government system, the economic system, the education system, arts, and the whole of society. Religion here enjoys a more comprehensive position. The renovation of religion in Sudan has a wider effect, whereas in Iran it does not undermine the position of the specific leadership.

We know a great deal about the West. We know much about their religion but they do not know much about our religion. We know about their religion because this is part of the tradition of our Ibrahimite [Abrahamite] religion. We also know their languages and their history but they know very little about our language and our history. Because of this, they note some aspects of similarity in the way of life here or there, they relate them to each other, and they connect them together in a manner that goes beyond all reality.

[Imam] People also accuse you of supporting extremist movements in the Arab and Islamic arena, citing as proof your defense of Islamic groups that oppose their governments and your refusal to condemn acts of armed violence committed by these groups. What do you say to that?

[Al-Turabi] Through religion, we know that life has smooth, straightforward, and moderate aspects as well as extremist and fanatical aspects. This is a human phenomenon which also has manifestations in religion, such as the emergence of a certain creed. You may find that the believers of this creed take an extremist and fanatical attitude toward it. Take also the example of socialism. Those who take an extremist and fanatical attitude about their socialism tend to take a leftist attitude unlike that [of socialism] in Europe.

Even nationalism is a Western theory. Some of its protagonists take extremist attitudes, show hatred toward everything foreign, and try to destroy everything foreign, as is happening now in Europe at the hands of some of the nationalist extremist parties and groups. All these are human phenomena. We do not deny that Muslims practice them too.

Islam has inherited faiths and creeds through its historical relations with Europe. Some people use the terminology and expression of these faiths and creeds to express even madness and irrationality. Hence it is not true to say that Sudan defends these movements that are far away from it. All the prophets came to renew the religion of God Almighty and called on all people to act fairly and not to do injustice to anyone else. But if someone acts in a manner that provokes those around him, history will act, but not in favor of the new Western manifestations which turn against people and try to drive them from their homes. Thus religion permits one to reply to an argument with an argument, but nothing else. However, if one person assaults another, then this other must return the assault, though he should never go to excess in his response to aggression nor be the one to start the aggression.

Naturally, some movements tend to embark on aggression and extremism. But religious jurisprudence does not permit fanaticism. Islam calls for tolerance, and if anyone comes to argue with us we argue with him and respond to his arguments with arguments of our own. But if he were to commit aggression against us, then he would be the one who started the aggression, so we then have the choice of either forgiving him if this would do any good, or defending ourselves so that he may not uproot our religion. This is one of the manifestations of adherence to religion which should be practiced as long as it is confined to defense and struggle to uphold right and religion.

Even in West Europe we see revolutions destroy constitutional legitimacy, such as has happened in Britain, France, Russia, and elsewhere, no matter how hard the old system tries to oppose the new system and even if this latter tries to establish itself gradually and gently. The old guard, out of their care for their own interests and whims, try to annihilate the new system in its cradle. This theory is well known in all political sciences.

If the Westerners like a movement, they call it a resistance movement. If they like its triumph, they call it revolution. But if they do not like it at all, then they call it terrorism and call it all sorts of names. This is the way they deal with the Islamic movements. Naturally, Westerners have their own whims and they base their criteria on them. But these criteria are scientifically broad even in their underlying theories. For this reason, I defend these movements if they are oppressed or wronged, or if attempts have been made to force them away from their religions. But likewise, I criticize these movements and try to counsel them if their religious fervor prompts them to become fanatics or extremist in fighting others with blows or even with excessive verbal abuse such as calling them agnostic. Such phenomena have existed throughout the history of Islamic movements, though they now appear as something new.

Driven by the fervor of youth, when they are in their adolescent years, young men tend to want to keep themselves independent of their families and they might even go as far as fighting their fathers or mothers, as is known. On the other hand, their fathers and mothers continue to see them as babies in cradles. This has always been one of the tenets of life and a law of evolution.

In fact, all new things suffer from the calamities of adolescence. But right demands that we try to be close to God Almighty, to worship Him, to learn from the history of mankind, and also to be fair.

The people we talk with in most cases are trying to organize a dialogue between the ruler who wants to suppress what is new, and the subjects who want to change conditions, sometimes resorting to force. Just as I do not want to see the energies of the Islamic world depleted in a head-on clash between rulers and subjects, and between those in power and those they govern, I do not want to see it depleted in a horizontal struggle between one country and another.

We always try to be mediators to bring two sides together and close the ranks of Muslim society. Thus society's progress should be gradual and gentle allowing everyone to contribute his ideas, for he might find others' ideas good. But should he find what the other side says to be odd, then he should keep silent and address himself to the good ideas. This is what man should always endeavor to do.

But we criticize the West because they turn criteria upside down. They seek democracy for themselves and anarchy in all its forms and expressions for the Islamic world. If they find that democracy is leading to Islam, they immediately abort it. They seek human rights in accordance with their own criteria and they try to impose them on public life in the Islamic world. But as soon as they note that that might lead to greater freedom for Islam, they oppose it and trample on human rights. They support the language of nationalism and independence, but when the nation's will begins to move toward Islamic laws, which are remote from their man-made laws, they naturally consider that to be backwardness that should be halted by any means or method.

They view things from the perspective of their experience with the Christian religion. Naturally, in their countries they had religious conflicts that were coupled with ailments, with which they interacted on a large scale, ending with the removal of religion from most aspects of life. So they want anyone with religion, in the post-Islamic age, to deal with religion in the way they dealt with it. Thus they have forgotten why God created people: "I have only created jinnis and men that they may serve Me." [Koranic verse]. Why God granted them freedom of opinion: "The truth comes from your Lord. Let him who will, believe, and let him who will, reject." [Koranic verse]. Why do they then rally against our language and against our criteria, as they are doing now?

[Imam] Sudan has suffered from religious extremism and bigotry. Some movements have gone to the extent of shedding the blood of innocent people as happened at Ansar al-Sunnah Mosque, which is situated in the Revolution quarter of Omdurman, and as happened also in a village near Wad Madani in al-Jazirah province at the beginning of this year at the hands of the Repudiation and Denunciation Group.... Do not these incidents make it imperative for Sudan to be cautious in its dealings with matters of extremism and fanaticism? What would you say to that?

[Al-Turabi] Extremism and fanaticism are among the ailments of religion, as I have previously said. The ailment of fanaticism has also befallen the West in respect of some aspects of their piety, so much so that the formalities of worship came to replace the entire religion, even if these formalities were devoid of the intention to worship God. This state of affairs led to the revolt of the famous reformation in Europe, and the Protestant factions split away, influenced by Islam. Indeed, the church there has monopolized the relationship between the servant and his God. Likewise, we Muslims also had in our Islamic history factions that attached much significance to outward manifestations and words, and that stuck to them fanatically, to the extent that anyone who disagreed with them on one word would be cast out. Some also show fanaticism in their adherence to the tenet of al-Batiniyah [a school of thought in Islam, characterized by divining a hidden meaning in the revealed texts], on the grounds that religion must have its hidden secrets which unite the apparent and the hidden, and without which there can be no good in any deed. In my opinion, this is nothing but hypocrisy. Yet there are some who fanatically adhere to al-Batiniyah and feel that they can dispense even with religion in their dealings with other people in real life.

But as their history shows, the people of Sudan are generally more moderate. Religion came to them through Sufism. People did not carry their adherence to al-Batiniyah to extremes despite the fact that the Islam that entered their country was that of Sufism. Islam did not enter Sudan to try to impose its laws, jurisprudence, and motives, as it did in many other countries. Even when Islam came into power in the days of the al-Zarqa Sultanate, for example, it did not alienate itself and embark on repudiating people. They did not consider all those who agreed with them to be believers and those who did not agree with them to be infidels, though a tendency toward such a thing manifested itself during the days of the Mahdi rule, because that was a revolution against imperialism. So vigor in fighting was coupled with vigor in feeling that those who were not on their side were not of their religion at all.

The Sudanese people are not known to be too fanatical about religious sectarianism, for they are Sunnis and so they do not act with extremism and bigotry. In their religious jurisprudence, they follow the Maliki creed. But even in their jurisprudence they do not resort to bigotry and sometimes they take up other terminologies, as is the case in Sufism. But for the most part they are open to each other, even in nationalist matters.

Sudan is not influenced by any Arab, African, or regional nationalism, because the Sudanese are open to their neighbors and to those around them. But I do not say that the ailments that afflict mankind do not afflict them. For such ailments have come to Sudan though in a very light manner. Sometimes, when people have personal jealousies, they try to express them in religious terms.

The recent movement you mentioned in your question was apparently a movement initiated by some fanatical old people, but was later championed by adolescents. Adolescents are always easily swayed to the left or to the right and to adherence to religion. They become fanatical about any movement whatsoever. This is a law of life, but it progresses through man.

Religious freedom exists in Sudan, though occasionally you find some strong manifestations of fanaticism on the part of one side or another. But the important thing is that people should read the history of Islam and thus see how it marches along the right course and how Muslims have deviated left and right. Preventive medicine should be found to deal with such a phenomenon before it becomes entrenched, so that once we detect symptoms of the disease, we will rush to treat it, and all this will cost us nothing but emergency medicine. Whereas if we ignore the symptoms, then the disease will intensify and we will then be forced to take stronger measures to deal with it. Thus treatment of ailments before they become entrenched is in fact easier.

From a historical point of view, the median world ['Alam al-Wasat] was the cradle of civilizations and religions and the means through which Islam entered Europe. It constituted a great power that protected Africa from colonialism thus forcing this colonialism to enter the African continent through its southern parts and then creep up to the Middle East leading to the Wars of the Crusades and the Zionist attempts to usurp Palestine; religion suffered a blow which led to its complete removal from the public life. Perhaps all these factors led to the manifestation of extremism and fanaticism here.

Though religion was removed from public life, it continued to enjoy people's love in their private lives, although they did not perform all aspects of worship. But they adhere to and uphold all traces of religion throughout their lives. This is the way God has made people and it cannot be changed by anyone.

Westerners believe that through their striking at the Orient, history has come to an end. Some Western thinkers said that history will end with the placing of the West at the top of the world, and so they want it to remain at the apex of the pyramid until the end of time. Naturally, the Westerners want to maintain their rule for eternity. But Islam's rise, and its shaking off the dust around it, has completely perplexed them and upset their plans. Anyway, there are numerous reasons for the spread of fanaticism and extremism in our region. It is the duty of us all to eliminate the causes of this ailment and to treat the root of the problem before it gets entrenched further and thus renders treatment harder.

Some Westerners might feel that it would be better to pit the Muslims against each other, so that they cannot rally all their power and move against the West. But they should be wiser, because if Islam were to muster power and rise to repel aggression, it would bring about a great deal of change in its relationship with them. They ought to remember that the influence of the French Revolution did not remain confined to France, but spread to the rest of Europe.

Hence it is better for them to gradually and gently open the road before Islam so that the Muslims may decide their destinies as they wish. All parts of the world have now become closer to each other. We in the Islamic People's Congress try to act in a spirit of moderation and reconciliation among the brothers as has been the case in Afghanistan, Somalia, Algeria, the Palestine Authority, the Hamas Movement, and so forth.

Following Iraq's entry into Kuwait, we led Islamic missions that visited all the capitals concerned to demand that Iraq should withdraw from its aggression so that we would not become embroiled in situations of tension which would harm us all. We visited all the capitals concerned in this spirit, but our efforts failed to meet with success. Even in Yemen, we tried to mediate between Sanaa and Aden in an attempt to narrow differences and reconcile their relations in order to prevent the flare-up of war. What happened as a result of this is well known.

A while ago, I went to Egypt and met with its president to talk to him about reconciliation within the Islamic movement. In Algeria too, we tried to mediate between the government and the Islamic Salvation Front, and here too we failed and were forced to use our relations with France for the purpose, thereby succeeding in holding a meeting of the two sides in the presence of France and the Islamic People's Congress. These reconciliatory efforts almost succeeded, but forces that were provoked by these efforts rushed to frustrate them. For there are forces in Algeria that do not want any recourse to either Arabism or Islam in Algeria. They want Algeria to remain a slave of France and a country in which the Arabic language and religion are held in contempt. France was preoccupied at the time with its election battle.

As to our mediation efforts between the Palestine Authority and Hamas, they fall within the framework of our efforts to eliminate tension between the two sides. Old relations exist between me and Yasir 'Arafat going back to the 1950s, and perhaps not only with him but with many of the strugglers who were killed by the Zionist terrorism in Tunisia, Lebanon, and elsewhere. Likewise, I have relations with the leaders of Hamas, which is a relatively new movement. Indeed, we brought representatives of both sides together here and they agreed on a charter that would regulate relations between them. But everything collapsed because the Oslo process was working behind their backs. Once more, we warned them not to let the media cameras turn their lenses on internecine fighting among the Palestinians so that the limited energies of the Palestinians would not be squandered in a useless conflict. We convinced them of the need to return once more to the negotiating table.

We do not consider out actions to be interference, because if a third party intervenes between two sides with the purpose of reconciling or mediating between the two sides, they do not consider it to be a foreign party that has committed aggression against them. For it is a party prompted by good will for all. Naturally, it leaves them free will.

Third parties are now coming to us to create differences between us. They do not want us to meet other than within the framework they lay for us. But reconciliation is a duty of all Muslims and should not be prevented by anything at all. In matters of reconciliation things that are not permitted in ordinary matters are allowed to take place, because reconciliation is an objective to be sought and the measures taken in achieving it might go beyond what is permissible in other matters.

[Imam] Sudan is accused of sheltering Hamas activists, among the charges made against it of harboring terrorists. What is your answer to these accusations?

[Al-Turabi] Firstly: Those who level these accusations always depend on rumors about so-called terrorists in the world, but nobody knows where those terrorists reside. So they point accusing fingers at Sudan so that all suspicions in the world are placed at its door.

Secondly: Perhaps they mean to blame Sudan for all Muslim activists as was the case with Engineer Yahya 'Ayyash so that he and those around him think that they are being looked for in far away places, giving them a false sense of security so that they act with less caution. Undoubtedly, the rumors they spread about the presence of 'Ayyash in Sudan were nothing but camouflage to cover their plots and lay a snare for him to catch him where he was. They are constantly aware that a Palestinian presence in their own territory is much better than a Palestinian presence in Sudan. But they always like to lay all rumors or suspicions about terrorism at Sudan's door. I do not mean by this that this directed campaign of rumors harms Sudan. At the beginning, one detests such accusations and rejects them, but then one realizes that when God wants to revive a virtue that has been overlooked, He picks a spiteful person to talk about it. Thanks to these false accusations, Sudan has become more famous in the world and those who love Islam and had never heard of Sudan before, have come to know Sudan and love it enormously. Many of their kinsmen too became interested in knowing what is behind all that campaign and came to distinguish between this idle talk and the truth about Sudan, and consequently to distinguish between reality and fantasy.

We know that a number of Western journalists have begun to read the Holy Koran and the Holy Koran is being translated into their languages. They want to know the basis of this phenomenon which they fear, so that they try to run away from it. God fills the hearts of the infidels with panic. God makes us fear some insects whose poison does not kill anyone, yet man continues to fear them until they disappear into their holes.

[Imam] Those who care about Sudan are worried because of the diminishing chances for national reconciliation following the completion of the presidential and parliament election measures. Do you share these people's concern or are you optimistic about the continuation of the reconciliatory efforts?

[Al-Turabi] The Sudanese National Assembly, whose establishment was completed at the beginning of this year, represents the various tributaries of the people's will, embracing all functions of life and all vocations and all the national Sudanese forces. It embraces all forces of whatever affiliation. This is the greatest reconciliation. Reconciliation in history is not something between any specific person and another, for history is not moved by individuals.

What is happening in Sudan at present engulfs the entire Sudanese life. Religion was not confined to one prophet, particularly as far as we Muslims are concerned. Even our Prophet, May God bless his soul and grant him grace, as soon as al-Madinah's construction was completed and its economic, scientific, and political structures were put in place, he bid it farewell and died.

This is the reconciliation that man should take into consideration in looking at history. God created the world to try people. The whole of history until our present times has been moved by others. For this reason, we must not look for individuals, for history forgets them. The struggle in the West is between one party and another and not between individuals.

Natural reconciliation essentially does not permit any one social force to let its whims, private interests, and affiliations rule its relations with others, thus transforming the relation in its entirety into conflicts between a victor and a vanquished and between a majority and a minority.

This is the case in the West, where the conflict is a conflict between the rich classes and the poor classes, between parties, between countries, and so forth. The European wars in which they killed each other provide proof of their infighting over the world. They fight each other and spread corruption on earth.

But we, we are a nation of unity. Reconciliation is the root of our faith. The closer we, poor and rich alike, get to God, and irrespective of how remote we might be from each other, the closer we get to the brothers, and no matter how different our views might be, we bridge them through consultations and counseling. When we meet, our hearts feel happy. We call the result of consultations a unanimity and not a majority opinion. This is the phenomenon which we should build upon in Sudan as a sound means for reconciliation. But if we were to ignore the entire Sudanese people and look to individuals to reconcile them, then we would be talking to people who are closer to each other and who constitute the majority of the Sudanese.

Bahrain

Bahrain: Killer of Corporal Executed by Firing Squad

JN2603062396 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0520 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 26 Mar (WAKH)—The death sentence against 'Isa Ahmad Hasan Qambar was carried out by a firing squad in Manama early this morning. Qambar and others were convicted of the deliberate and premeditated killing of Ibrahim Rashid al-Sa'idi, chief corporal at the Ministry of Interior, on 22 March 1995 in the Nuwaydirat area. Al-Sa'idi was killed while performing his duty.

The death sentence was carried out after the convict had used up all appeals in accordance with the law and the sentence became final. The Supreme Court sentenced the convict to death on 4 July 1995. The verdict was upheld by the Criminal Department of the Civil Higher Court of Appeal on 27 November 1995 and by the Court of Cassation on 17 March 1996.

Bahrain: Police Fire Tear Gas To Disperse Qambar Mourners

NC2603093896 Paris AFP in English 0844 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nicosia, March 26 (AFP)—Police fired tear gas to disperse women mourners who gathered outside the home of a Shiite Muslim executed by firing squad on Tuesday [26 March] for killing a police officer, the dead man's brother said.

Women could be heard sobbing in the background as 'Abd-al-Nabi Ahmad Husayn Qambar spoke to AFP by telephone after his brother, 'Isa Ahmad Hasan Qambar, was executed early Tuesday.

"The women gathered outside after hearing about the execution. Anti-riot police came and fired a tear-gas grenade. The women came inside and we gave them water," 'Abd-al-Nabi said.

He also said his brother was buried hours after his execution. "The police called us in the morning and told us to go to the cemetery," he said.

"There 'Isa was waiting for us. We saw him. His body was riddled with bullets but not his face. We made prayers for the dead and buried him," he said.

The funeral took place calmly and only men were present as is the custom in Islam.

Asked about the family's morale, he replied, "we're patient." 'Isa is survived by four brothers and half brothers as well as nine sisters and half-sisters. 'Abd-al-Nabi said 'Isa was 28 although press reports said he was 29.

Nuwaydirat, a village in the suburbs of the capital of Manama where the Qambar home is located, is "living in fear. Police have deployed in strength and people are afraid to go outside," he said.

Bahrain: Opposition Faxes Statement to AFP Condemning Execution

NC2603090896 Paris AFP in English 0814 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nicosia, March 26 (AFP)—Bahrain's exiled opposition condemned Tuesday's [26 March] execution of a Shiite Muslim in Manama as a "political murder" and warned it would only fuel more anti-government unrest.

'Isa Ahmad Hasan Qambar, 29, was put to death by a firing squad early Tuesday for murdering a police officer during the first wave of political unrest last year, the first such execution by Bahraini authorities in 20 years.

"Instead of listening to demands from international human rights organizations for (a) fair and just trial, they went ahead and approved a politically-motivated death sentence," the Bahrain Freedom Movement said.

"Bahrain now faces a more bleak future," the London-based opposition group said in a statement faxed to AFP.

"The murder of 'Isa Qambar is bound to fuel more unrest, despite all the measures of collective punishment," it added.

Political violence erupted in December 1994 after the Sunni-led authorities arrested a Shiite Muslim cleric who called for a restoration of parliament, suspended in 1975.

At least 21 people have been killed in the violence, including eight since January.

Bahrain: Suspects Arrested for Throwing Incendiary Bombs at School

JN2603082296 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0700 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 26 Mar (WAKH)—The GULF NEWS AGENCY learned that three people were arrested for throwing incendiary bombs at Samahij Elementary-Preparatory School for Boys. The incident caused one student to suffer from burns.

Responsible Bahraini sources told the agency that the three suspects are from the Samahij village and that they are being interrogated. The Ministry of Interior will issue a detailed statement later.

The three men threw three incendiary bombs at various places in the Samahij Elementary-Preparatory School for Boys during recreation time at the school. One of the bombs caused burns to the foot and leg of nine year-old 'Ali Hasan 'Abd-al-Jabbar, a student in the fourth grade. The two other bombs hit other places in the school but caused no injuries among the students.

Bahrain: Iranian Daily Cites Reports on Arrests in Bahrain

NC2303161596 Tehran SALAM in Persian
17 Mar 96 p 12

[From the Foreign News Desk]

[FBIS Translated Text] A wave of new arrests have been made in Bahrain by the security forces if the emirate.

According to IRNA, following an attack on a restaurant in Bahrain that resulted in the killing of seven foreigners, the anti-riot squads in the country arrested 400 persons, including some children.

According to AFP from Nicosia, the Islamic Liberation Front of Bahrain [ILFB] and eye witnesses report that most of the persons arrested are from the Shiite-inhabited areas of (Adyan) and (Mu'amir) on the Sitra island south of Manama.

The ILFB claims that the anti-riot squads are carrying out new operations collectively punishing the residents of these two areas. It adds: They have not spared a single house and have embarked on ruthless ransacking and confiscation of residents' belongings and merciless harassment of the them and their children.

The ILFB condemned the hurling of an incendiary bomb on a restaurant in Sitra on Thursday [14 March] in which seven Bangladeshis were killed and called for the establishment of an independent inquiry commission to be made up of domestic and foreign observers.

The ILFB accused the security forces of carrying out the attack against the opposition in order to elicit foreign support; however, the culprits of the fire in the restaurant where the seven Bangladeshis were killed have been arrested. Another deliberate arson attack has been reported that took place recently. It destroyed a sports stadium.

AFP reporting from Manama says: Bahrain television announced: Those who were responsible for the fire in the Sitra restaurant have been arrested and details will be disseminated later by the interior ministry.

Prior to the blaze in the restaurant, another restaurant that was frequented by Westerners was the target of a similar attack, but the customers, who were mostly British, managed to make a timely escape.

In the wake of the above attacks, the Bahraini officials embarked on investigations in the Shiite-inhabited areas of Sitra and Jidd Hafs and arrested 400 persons.

The Bahraini cabinet affairs and information minister said on Saturday that Manama will adopt emergency measures in order to tackle the security crisis in Bahrain. According to AFP from Manama, these decisions were adopted after the recent fires in Bahrain.

In an interview with the AL-AYYAM newspaper, Muhammad Ibrahim al-Mutawwa' mentioned the above without elaborating on the nature of the decisions and stated: The people want exceptional measures to be taken to combat the unusual situation in the country.

For the first time, the Bahraini armed forces announced on 20 January that they are prepared to terminate the 15-month political crisis in Bahrain by formulating more stringent laws. The recent crisis in Bahrain follows the arrest of one of the Muslim clerics who called for the restoration of the parliamentary system in the country.

Kuwait

Kuwait: SAIRI's al-Hakim on UNSC Resolution 986

96LH0119A Kuwait AL-WATAN in Arabic 16 Feb 96 p 3

[Report by Samir Yasin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, chairman of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI], has called on the Kuwaiti people to use all their resources and capacities to confront Saddam Husayn's regime and not to be content with the efforts being made by the Kuwaiti Government. He said the Kuwaiti Government is trying to confront the regime, and its efforts have been effective. However, the people must also make an effort in this regard, particularly as Saddam's regime is still posing a threat to the Kuwaiti and the Iraqi peoples.

Speaking at a large open meeting in al-Baghli Hall, in al-Nuzhah area, al-Hakim said that the Almighty God has granted the Kuwaiti people financial and other resources. There is a big group of intellectuals in Kuwait who enjoy the freedom to think and work. Kuwait enjoys the blessings of harmony between the ruler and the subject and between the various communities, making it a good model for the area. The people should utilize these resources to serve the common goal, which is to get rid of the Iraqi tyrant and establish security and stability in the region so that people, particularly the Kuwaitis and Iraqis, can live in security and peace.

He suggested that popular committees be formed to support the Iraqi people. He said Kuwaiti National

Assembly Speaker al-Sa'dun told him that there are popular committees in some Arab countries that still support Saddam's regime. He expressed the belief that the regime has not bought all these circles. However, some popular circles are still being misled by this regime.

Al-Hakim said that the Kuwaitis must try to clarify the facts and explain what is taking place in Iraq by using popular methods, which the government cannot use.

The SAIRI chairman expects Saddam's regime to accept UN Resolution 986, which provided for the sale of a limited quantity of oil to buy food and medicine for two reasons: The first is the firm and unanimous UN decision not to allow the regime to violate the embargo and exploit the Iraqi people's hardships. This UN position was reinforced when Russia and France supported the resolution. It was reinforced even further when Husayn Kamil leveled a big blow to the regime by defecting and exposing its weapons' programs, thus forcing the regime to give up its hope of ending the blockade soon. The second reason was the growing popular pressure at home, which was threatening the regime.

Al-Hakim explained the background to the UN resolution and the role the SAIRI played in drafting it through its contacts with UN officials and its political activities. He said that the SAIRI last year raised several slogans and tried to implement them. They included the slogan regarding the need to distinguish between the Iraqi regime and the Iraqi people in applying the blockade. When the United Nations imposed the blockade, it did not distinguish between the two. Thus, the Iraqi people were besieged from outside by the UN resolutions and from inside by the effects of the regime's policies and measures. The economic, health, and security conditions deteriorated, creating a tragic situation in Iraq. About 550,000 Iraqi children died in the past five years because of these conditions.

The regime exploited this situation to exert pressure on the United Nations to lift the blockade. It also used it to exert pressure on the neighboring countries, particularly Kuwait. It shamelessly and arrogantly accused Kuwait of seeking to kill the Iraqi people by its policy and position and of leading a cold war against the Iraqi people. Al-Hakim refuted this claim, saying that we should thank Kuwait. It was the first Arab and Islamic country, apart from Iran, as a host country, that helped Iraqi people.

He said that the SAIRI asked the United Nations to distinguish between the regime and the people. It asked the United Nations to maintain the blockade against the regime and lift it on the Iraqi people. The purpose was to ease the people's sufferings and remove the card the regime was using to lift the blockade against it and obtain money to rebuild its military machine.

The resolution was drafted in a way that would not allow the regime to benefit from the oil revenues. The resolution allowed the United Nations to supervise the sale of the oil, receive the money, and distribute the food to all the Iraqi people.

In the absence of scrutiny, the regime, he said, could use Resolution 986 to sell oil to some states at low prices to win their political support. If the United Nations does not make sure that food is distributed fairly in all parts of Iraq, the regime could also exploit the situation to exert pressure on the people, as it did in the food ration system. The regime could also export the food and medicine to obtain money. For example, it is currently exporting dates, although the people are starving.

Regarding the recent U.S. defense secretary's statement about a plan to change the political situation in Iraq, al-Hakim said that the Americans are trying to change the situation and replace Saddam, but they want the change from above. They want to remove Saddam and his henchmen and bring in another group to govern. This plan faces several problems. This method for change is unrealistic. The Americans tried to use it before without success, and they might not succeed in the future. The Iraqi opposition and some countries in the region, particularly Syria, have opposed this policy.

Regarding the federation plan in Iraq, al-Hakim said that division and fragmentation in Iraq is an unrealistic idea and cannot be implemented. If the purpose of a federation is to create national and sectarian division, it would be unacceptable, as it could create conflicts that might extend to neighboring countries. If the purpose is to divide the country into administrative regions and decentralize the government, this system exists in the world and has succeeded in some countries and could succeed in Iraq. However, the Iraqi people must be consulted first. The people must elect the ruler and choose the government. Al-Hakim explained that some problems in Iraq can be resolved through a federal system, taking into consideration the characteristics of the various sects and groups.

Kuwait: SAIRI's al-Hakim on Expected Developments

96LH0120A Kuwait AL-WATAN in Arabic 17 Feb 96 p 3

[Interview with Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, SAIRI chairman, by Samir Yasin in Kuwait; date not given—first two paragraphs are AL-WATAN introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] A year has passed since AL-WATAN held its last interview with Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, chairman of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI]. During that interview, al-Hakim spoke about some important issues. He expected 1995 to witness concrete developments in Iraq. This past year witnessed many developments, the most important of which were the rebellion of the al-Jubur and al-Dulaym tribes against Saddam's regime, the defection of Saddam's son-in-law Husayn Kamil, Jordan's proposal for a federation with Iraq, and the UN Security Council Resolution 986, which is known as "the oil for food" resolution. In the face of these developments, we are bewildered by the regime's ability to survive despite all the difficulties it is facing at home and abroad.

Regarding the situation in Iraq and the developments that have taken place and could take place in the future, AL-WATAN met again with SAIRI Chairman Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim and held this interview with him.

[Yasin] About this time last year, you said that the regime in Iraq would be changed in 1995, but the year has passed and your hope has not been fulfilled. What has exactly happened that changed your expectations and plans?

[Al-Hakim] I said at the beginning of last year that there was a real chance for a change in that year. Indeed, we witnessed several developments in Iraq on the local, Arab, and international levels. Had these developments been allowed to take their natural course, the change we were expecting would have taken place. I must point out here that the regime declared a state of total alert five times last year because it was expecting a change to take place in Iraq.

The obstacles that took place and foiled the plan were mainly the result of interventions by some international forces.

[Yasin] Can you name these international forces and how they tried to foil the plan to change the regime?

[Al-Hakim] We thought then that a change could take place as a result of cooperation between the Iraqi Army and the people through an organized movement from the south and the north to exert pressure on the regime. We thought that the Iraqi Army was ready to cooperate with this movement. We tried that in field operations, which produced positive results. The regime's response was strong. It sent a letter to the United Nations about these operations, mentioning some states involved in them like the United States and Iran, and myself. This was the first time the regime has submitted such a note to the Security Council.

The northern region witnessed many operations, whose outcome was positive. Iraqi Army units joined the opposition forces. Some units began surrendering. They created a general atmosphere in the Iraqi Army, heralding a major change. However, some U.S. Administration elements in northern Iraq intervened and foiled the movement. These American elements thought that there was a plan to carry out a military coup in Iraq. The Iraqi opposition was invited to participate in it and given specific dates and times. The timetable and the areas where the military operations will take place were revealed. The American elements withdrew and informed the opposition that they would not take responsibility for this plan because it has been exposed. This had a negative effect in Iraq and caused frustration among the people, who stopped believing promises and assurances.

[Yasin] Can we say that your confidence in the U.S. Administration's position has been shaken and the hopes you had pinned on the possibility of coordination with it to overthrow the regime have been dashed?

[Al-Hakim] We did not seek coordination. We only asked the U.S. Administration not to stop activities against the regime from northern Iraq. The U.S. Administration maintains control and hegemony in northern Iraq and its views and position have a major practical effect. Following the developments I mentioned earlier, the U.S. Administration began adopting a negative stand toward any opposition activity in this respect.

[Yasin] Some states in the area have been afraid of the possibility that the Shiites would assume power in Iraq, hindering your plans to overthrow the regime. Has any change taken place in their position?

[Al-Hakim] I do not think that there is fear now of the possibility that the Shiites would assume power in Iraq because no one is advocating it. There is no fear of this. There is fear that Iraq would change and a genuine government would be established, based on the people's will. There is a trend calling for changes in the higher echelons of the regime only. This will only extend the tragedy in Iraq. Some international forces think that their interests demand that the change be in this way.

[Yasin] The Iraqi arena witnessed a rebellion by the al-Jubur and al-Dulaym tribes. Have you been able to cooperate with this movement to carry out joint actions?

[Al-Hakim] This movement took place at the beginning of last year, as I expected. I was aware of the political position of the Arab Sunni brothers in the western region. Members of these tribes engaged in an open confrontation with the regime. This movement is developing and growing in coordination and cooperation with the opposition forces. We are trying to develop this cooperation to carry out operations in the future.

[Yasin] The Iraqi opposition is still fragmented. It does not have a framework to unite it. Is there anything new in this regard?

[Al-Hakim] It is not true that the Iraqi opposition is fragmented. Some political parties occasionally try to blame the opposition and shirk their own responsibility for the tragic situation in Iraq. We do not think that the opposition is fragmented. Differences in international positions affect the opposition movement. The Iraqi opposition met in several conferences and manifested its political unity. However, when we reached the stage of launching field operations, knowing that a change in Iraq cannot take place only through political and media activity, we found several obstacles in the way. This led to differences of opinion between the opposition groups. Some opposition groups are determined to continue working together despite these differences and obstacles. Some opposition groups might not have a large presence in Iraq and could stop functioning because of the obstacles. In general, the opposition maintains a common position and is ready to meet to consider any action.

[Yasin] Some people think that the conflict taking place between the Kurdish groups could also take place in Iraq if the opposition assumes power and a multiparty system is established. They think this proves the importance of having a strong regime — even if it were Saddam Husayn's regime — to safeguard Iraq's unity. What is your response to this?

[Al-Hakim] There are objective reasons for what is happening in the north. When these reasons disappear, the situation in the north will stabilize. The main reason for what is happening in the north is that the region so far does not have a political identity. It is neither independent nor linked to the regime. Without a political identity, negative manifestations will naturally develop. The Kurds have turned their attention away from the confrontation with the regime. They turned inward, pushing internal differences to the surface. Had the Kurds directed their energies against the regime, they would be united as in the past. Despite what is being said about the situation in the north, it is not as bad and serious as it is portrayed. The situation is currently stable. No clashes are taking place. There is a truce. Matters are being managed appropriately. The economic situation is much better than in other parts of Iraq. The same applies to the security, political, and democratic situations.

We think that after the revolution, Iraq will have a regime governed by political freedom and the people's will. We do not think that the situation, after the anticipated change, will be dangerous or will lead to internal conflict, as some people are trying to say.

[Yasin] Based on your view of the situation, what is the present position of the regime? What is the extent of its control of the various areas, particularly the south?

[Al-Hakim] The regime relies on two main pillars: Its ability to firmly suppress the people and the loyalty of the Republican Guard and the special forces. Without these two pillars, the regime would be very weak. Suppression has become ineffective among the Iraqi people, who are now able to defend themselves in some areas in the north and south. An undeclared truce by the regime exists in the south because of its inability to continue its suppressive actions and the army's weakness in these areas. The regime now mainly depends on the Republican Guard and the special forces. They are the only ones able to carry out wide-scale suppression. The regime uses these forces to defend Baghdad and its suburbs. Therefore, we think that if a real anti-regime movement takes place in Iraq, the army will join the people. If this happens, the army's unity with the people will influence the position of the Republican Guards.

[Yasin] Are the opposition forces in control of areas in the south that could enable them to act militarily against the regime? How big are these areas?

[Al-Hakim] The size of these areas is a military secret. I can only say that our forces control areas in the south from which they can act. Our forces maintain broad relations with members of the Iraqi army and the tribes. They are planning and coordinating their actions for the next stage.

[Yasin] Why no comprehensive popular uprising has taken place, despite the suffering, repression, and persecution?

[Al-Hakim] The main reason is the regime's repressive methods, which make the Iraqi people hesitant to carry out a wide-scale movement. They want to be sure that they can achieve better success than in the 1991 uprising. Despite that uprising's successes, it did not achieve its major goal of toppling the regime. Therefore, the Iraqi people are very careful and cautious in what they do because they want to ensure their success and not cause major losses as in the 1991 uprising. As we know, the regime is repressive and bloody; it is ready to carry out mass annihilation.

[Yasin] Saddam is trying to play the religious card by banning alcohol and announcing the times of prayer. Do you think that he can succeed in this game?

[Al-Hakim] In making these decisions, the regime is showing its submission to the Iraqi people, who have begun to turn to religion and its commitments. The regime is trying to contain the people's growing movement through these measures, the fake referendum, and the elections to the Iraqi Assembly.

[Yasin] How do you view the Jordanian position? What is your position on the reported existence of a secret plan to restore the Hashemite federation?

[Al-Hakim] The Jordanian position is based on two main considerations: The first is that the Jordanian regime is the closest to the Iraqi regime and knows better what is going on in Iraq. Jordan realized that the Iraqi regime has reached a hopeless situation and cannot survive. Therefore, it is trying to change its position in preparation for future developments. The second is based on Jordan's relations with the countries in the region. Jordan has been trying to repair its relations with the Gulf states, which were shaken because of its position during the Kuwait liberation war.

Regarding the Hashemite federation, I personally do not know the Jordanian leadership's intentions. Jordan has publicly denied such a plan. Nevertheless, I think that a Hashemite federation is an unrealistic idea and inconsistent with internal, regional, and international principles. The proposal has no political basis.

[Yasin] You have met with his highness the amir of Kuwait and his highness the heir apparent. What were the results of your talks with them? What is your comment on the information minister's recent statement that an enemy you know is better than an enemy you do not know?

[Al-Hakim] In my talks with the brother officials in Kuwait, I noticed that they were serious in dealing with the Iraqi issue. Their position was positive. They emphasized that this statement does not represent Kuwait's political position.

[Yasin] We have noticed that the Iraqi regime has repaired, to a certain degree, its relations with some Gulf states. However, the Iraqi opposition's efforts in these states is still limited. Do you have plans to extend your relations to these states and open more channels to confront the Iraqi regime's efforts?

[Al-Hakim] We concentrated our efforts in Iraq's neighboring states. Let us not forget that the regime officially is still the ruling regime in Iraq and represents Iraq at the United Nations. Countries deal with official bodies. That is why the Iraqi regime could act with governments and states. Regarding our relations with the Gulf states, we made an effort in this regard. We maintain relations with these states, but they are not official relations.

[Yasin] What is the worst that can happen if the blockade on Iraq was partially lifted, according to Resolution 986?

[Al-Hakim] This resolution is a two-edge sword. If it is carefully implemented and achieves its purpose in lifting the blockade on the Iraqi people and maintaining it on the regime, it will serve the process of change and will ease the Iraqi people's sufferings. If some gaps take place during its implementation, the regime will use the oil revenues to strengthen its military and security machines, buy political loyalties, and maintain its grip on the Iraqi people.

[Yasin] Do you think that the existing coordination between the Iraqi regime and Syria in the dispute with Turkey over water could improve the relations between them and cause Syria to change its position?

[Al-Hakim] Until now, there has been no change in the Syrian position. Talks between the two sides on common problems do not mean a development is taking place in their relations. Even Kuwait and Iran held talks with the regime on the prisoners' issue. The water issue is important to the two peoples. The talks are technical and limited to the water issue.

Kuwait: Government Rejects Proposal on Sex Segregation

*LD2503200896 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic
1754 GMT 25 Mar 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Kuwait, 25 Mar — Jamal al-Kindri, rapporteur of the Education, Culture, and Guidance Committee of the National Assembly, has stated today that the government has rejected an assembly proposal to ban mixing of males and females at Kuwait University, the teaching staff of applied education institution, and the private schools on the pretext of technical problems that prevent its application at the present.

Member of parliament al-Kindri added in a statement to journalists following the committee's meeting that "the government has rejected the proposal because of its inability to apply it at the present time for technical problems." He added: "The Education Ministry's refusal to implement the ban on mixing at its educational bodies is, in principle, a rejected position."

However, al-Kindri noted that the question of separating females from males at the general institution of applied education is already applied "and we cannot but thank those responsible for it."

He stressed the necessity for the Education Ministry to separate males from females at private schools. These schools are no longer serving the sons and daughters of foreign communities only but "its services have been extended to the sons and daughters of the Kuwaitis and Muslims of this country."

On the other hand, the Human Rights Committee of the National Assembly received at its meeting today a number of people concerned with issues of defending human rights in order to discuss a proposal to establish the "Kuwaiti Organization [Hay'ah] of Human Rights."

A statement released by the committee stressed that that organization should be a Kuwaiti body independent from the umbrella of the law of public welfare societies.

The meeting was also attended by members of the National Assembly Dr. Ya'qub Hayati, Jasim Muhammad al-Qutami, Jamal al-'Uthman, Mubarak al-'Adwani, and Mubarak Sa'dun al-Mutawwa'.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: 'Official' Saudi Newspaper Calls Iraqi Elections 'Farce'

NC2503130796 Paris AFP in English
1223 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riyadh, March 25 (AFP) - An official Saudi newspaper on Monday [25 March] denounced Iraq's parliamentary elections as a "farce."

Iraqi President Saddam Husayn "wants to redecorate his institutions and give the illusion his regime is pursuing political reforms, but he will not succeed in deceiving the international community," the daily 'UKAZ said.

"It's a farce," the newspaper added.

Iraqis on Sunday voted from among 689 candidates for 220 members of parliament. All candidates had been screened by the authorities, with 160 officially representing the Ba'th Party and the rest said to be independents.

"The Ba'th candidates are ahead of all other candidates in all regions," a Ba'th party official said after counting ended early Monday.

The official results were to be announced later in the day.

US-led military forces used Saudi Arabia as a launchpad for the 1991 Gulf War to liberate Kuwait from seven months of Iraqi occupation.

Saudi Arabia: Statement on Decision To Deport Dr. Muhammad al-Mas'ari

MS2503133796 London CDLR Monitor in English
24 Mar 96

[Statement issued by the "Cultural Movement" in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, received via Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights of Saudi Arabia, CDLR; received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text]

Statement About the British Government's Decision To Deport Dr.Muhammad al-Mas'ari

The cultural circles in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have been astounded by the British Government's decision to remove the human rights activist and political reformist, Dr. Muhammad al-Mas'ari, from Britain after what seems to be a submission by the government of the United Kingdom to a base form of blackmail and pressure by the Saudi government. While expressing their profound regret for such a decision, the Cultural Movement in the Kingdom would like to highlight the following important facts for the attention of decision makers in the United Kingdom, the members of the British House of Commons, the business community, members of the public, and media and research institutions: First: The British hospitality shown to Dr. Muhammad al-Mas'ari has had a strong impact on the Saudi people, especially among cultured circles. This good gesture has gained the United Kingdom the respect of our people who greatly appreciate the UK's adherence to democratic norms and values. It is saddening and regrettable that the Home Office has chosen by its recent decision to distort the good image. Second: The decision has come at a time when hopes in a national reconciliation were revived following the delegation of administrative duties to the Crown Prince, whom some people believed would respond positively to the demands of reform in a manner that would reinforce stability and peaceful co-existence in the region. Hence, the Home Office's decision has come at the most inappropriate time. Third: The government of Mr. John Major has made a grave mistake by seeking to appease the personal ambitions of certain parties within the ruling family in total violation of the Kingdom's constitution known as the Statute of Governorships. The decision to expel Dr. al-Mas'ari was handed over to the defence minister in order to convey it to the King. The initiative amounts to an insult because it is Crown Prince Abdullah who is the acting head of state by virtue of a royal decree. Opting to deal with certain parties favouring one side over the other is a policy that is void of wisdom and lacks the diplomacy that ought to have been observed in such circumstances. Fourth: Political stability in the Kingdom is not being served by the attitude of Mr. Malcolm Rifkind and his assistants. It would be better not to rely on the information fed to them by the Saudi ambassador in London, and it would be necessary to ascertain the nature of developments within the kingdom. Taking such matters into consideration will undoubtedly preserve British interests and save future contracts once matters are resolved. Recently, significant concessions were awarded to American companies in spite of the tenders submitted by the British. This might not happen again in the future if Mr. Major's government refrained from making such decisions. While expressing confidence in the fairness of the British judiciary and the British Parliament, the Cultural Movement in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia appeals to all concerned parties to exert their efforts in order to restore justice, defend freedom and fight tyranny, especially in the case of Dr. Muhammad al-Mas'ari and his colleagues, who have from the very first instant pursued peaceful means of change and expression and have been directly responsible for saving the country from being swept away in a tide of violence.

[Signed] The Cultural Movement in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Monday, 8 January 1996

Yemen

Yemen: Joint Yemeni-Omani Committee Begins Meetings

JN2503210896 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Television Network in English 1930 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The meetings of the second round of the Joint Yemeni-Omani Committee started in Sanaa Monday [25 March], headed by the ministers of housing in the two countries. The ministers, 'Ali Hamid Sharaf and his Omani counterpart Malik Bin-Sulayman al-Ma'mari, exchanged cordial words at the beginning of the first session of the talks.

Three specialized committees were formed at the first committee meetings to study technical aspects. The second committee will discuss economic and trade cooperation, while the third committee is assigned to study cultural, scientific, youth, sports, and environmental cooperation. The committees will put forth a number of visions and a number of agreements and protocols to be signed in the final session Wednesday.

Iraq: Commission Announces Assembly Election Winners

JN2503171796 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1703 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 25 Mar (INA) — The Higher Commission Supervising the Elections in Iraq today announced the names of the winners in the fourth National Assembly elections. In a statement issued by the Higher Commission, the election results show that 220 candidates, including 16 women, won Assembly seats. The number of candidates was 689.

Iraq: Names of National Assembly Election Winners Announced

JN2603122096 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1715 GMT 25 Mar 96

[Statement by the Higher Commission Supervising Elections in Iraq—read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. And say: "Work righteous; soon will God observe your work, and His apostle, and the believers." [Koranic verse] In expression of the democratic policy chosen by the party leadership and the state for a broad popular participation in running the country's affairs and in embodiment of the decision of the leader of the march, the holder of the banner of right, mujahid leader President Saddam Husayn, may God preserve him, to whom the people gave absolute allegiance on the Great March Day, and based on Republican Decree No. 28, issued on 24 January 1996, the fourth term of the National Assembly elections—the term of the crossing—took place on Sunday 24 March, 1996 in accordance with National Assembly Law No. 26 for the year 1995. [passage omitted]

[Signed] 'Izzat Ibrahim, deputy chairman of the Revolution Command Council, chairman of the Higher Commission Supervising the Elections in Iraq

The following is a list of those who won the National Assembly membership, on the understanding that 93.5 percent of registered voters cast their votes:

Baghdad Governorate:

First Constituency:

Dr. Mundhir Wardi 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Alusi
Balqis Husayn 'Abbas al-'Azzawi
Muhammad Khalil Habib al-Shaykhali

Second Constituency:

Dr. Walid Ghanim Bahnam al-Tawil
Suha 'Abd-al-Sattar Mahdi al-'Azzawi
Sabih Muhammad Ibrahim al-Samarra'i
Kamil Matrud Jallab al-Rubay'i
'Adnan Ruhayyim Rasul al-'Abbadi

Third Constituency:

Ghanim 'Aziz Khadduri Ilyas
Sabri Falih Muhammad al-Khammas
Qasim Nusayyif Jasim al-Rubay'i
'Ali Salman Burhan Muhammad
Khalid Baqir Fakhir al-Sa'idi

Fourth Constituency:

Dr. Sultan 'Abd-al-Qadir Mahmud al-Shawi
'Abd-al-Qadir 'Abd-al-Razzaq 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Janabi
Qays Baqir Sa'id al-Ghabban

Fifth Constituency:

Iftikhar Ahmad Ayyub al-Samarra'i
Dr. Nizar Jasim Husayn al-'Anbaki
Dr. Ghalib 'Ulaywi Hasan al-Jasim
Akram Jassam Muhammad al-Dulaymi
Munir Wazir Wuhayyib al-'Ubaydi

Sixth Constituency:

Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi Hammadi
'Abd-al-Wahhab 'Abdallah Yusuf al-Hiti
Lamis Qasim Hammudi al-'Abdali
Raja' Murad 'Abd-al-Qadir al-Shawi
Dr. Sa'dun Khalifah Mahdi al-Tikriti

Seventh Constituency:

Hisham Hasan Tawfiq al-Yawar
Mahmud Mansi Husayn al-'Ubaydi
Lamya' 'Abd-al-Sattar Nuri al-Mufti
Saddam Muhammad Kahyah al-'Amiri
Muhammad Jalil Habbush al-Tikriti

Eighth Constituency:

Khalid Jawad Ma'in al-Sa'idi
Dr. Rasul Radi Harbi al-Zubaydi
Salimah Lazim Shilbah al-Lami
Fadil Salih Tamir al-'Ani

Ninth Constituency:

Dr. Muhammad Muzaffar Hashim al-Adhami
Muhsin Muhammad Sa'id al-Suway'idi
Hadi Shahid Hadi Tuwayriji
Yusuf Ibrahim Tahir al-Musawi

10th Constituency:

Fadil Mahmud Gharib al-Mashayikhi
Hamzah 'Abd Sajit al-Shammari
Dr. Salman Zaydan Rukhayyis al-Nidawi
Mu'ayyad Rahim Janani al-Rubay'i
Jasim 'Abd Katiq al-Tamimi

11th Constituency:

Sayf-al-Din Mahmud al-Mashhadani
Latif Hasan 'Alwan al-'Alwan
'Abd-al-A'imah Hassun Ahmad Majid
'Ali 'Abd Najm al-Mashhadani
Dr. Yusuf Hamdan 'Amir Al Izirij

12th Constituency:

Haifa' Muhammad 'Abbas al-Shykhali
Muhammad Tahir Shukri al-Hayali
'Amir Ibrahim Muhammad al-Samarra'i
Dr. Muhammad Nusayyif Jasim al-Janabi
Farhan Jum'ah Mandil al-'Abdali

13th Constituency:

Sa'd Qasim Hammudi al-'Abdali
Dr. Khattab 'Abd-al-Karim 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Qaysi
Hisham Rashid Salih al-'Azzawi

14th Constituency:

Dr. Husayn Jasim Muhammad al-Nidawi
Sajir Zubayr Ju'atah al-Dulaymi
Dr. 'Ali Jasim 'Uqlah al-Zubaydi
Khalaf Ibrahim Mirhij al-'Abbasi

15th Constituency:

Malik 'Ali Mahmud al-Ghurayri
Majid Kamil Latif al-Dulaymi
Muhammad Ni'mah Nasir al-'Amiri

16th Constituency:

Hamid Yusuf Hammadi al-Nasiri
Dr. Taha Salman Najm al-Juburi
Mahmud Salman 'Isa al-Juburi

Ninawa Governate

First Constituency:

Samirah 'Aziz Mahmud al-Juraysi
Lafi Sultan Shihab al-Badrani
Dr. Zahir Jamil Salih al-Habbu
Kamal Hamdun Mulla 'Allawi al-Hamdani
Hazim Muhammad Taha al-Mashhadani

Second Constituency:

Dhannun 'Ali Suwadi al-Hadidi
Dr. Nawfal 'Abd-al-Wahid Dhannun al-Talib
Sa'ud 'Aziz Ghazal Kashmulah
'Abd-al-Hadi Hasan Majid al-Juburi
'Arif Dhannun Yunus al-Qassab

Third Constituency:

Ibrahim Yusuf Turki al-Juburi
Hadi Sa'id Hajji Jabbu
Jawhar Muhyi-al-Din Janghir al-Harki
Yahya 'Alli Musa al-Bijwani
'Abd-al-Hamid Ahmad Rida al-Bayyati

Fourth Constituency:

Dr. Salamah Hasan Mutlaq al-Juburi
Fathi Yunus Jasim al-'Ubaydi
Muhammad Khalaf Hasan al-'Ikab
Sultan Mijbil 'Ali al-Wakka'

Fifth Constituency:

Muwaffaq As'ad 'Askar al-Juburi
Khalid Ahmad sufuq al-Faysal
'Izza al-Din 'Abdallah Husayn Al Budawlah
'Isa 'Afqu Mattu al-Rashqani
Muhsin Husayn Wahab al-Hayish

Al-Basrah Governorate:

First Constituency:

Khalid 'Abd-al-Jabbar Salih al-Hamad
'Abd-al-Mun'im 'Abd-al-Majid 'Abd-al-Jababr al-Mansur
'Adnan Ya'qub Yusuf al-'Isa
'Abd-al-Razzaq Sa'ud 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Mani'
Kamal Sabri Najm al-Sa'dun

Second Constituency:

Dr. Layla Yasin Husayn al-Amir
Sa'd Mahmud Sa'ud al-Sa'dun
Muhammad Zaqur 'Inad al-Baydani
Dr. Faruq Salih 'Umar Al Ishaq

Third Constituency:

Fadil radi Mushattat al-'Aydani
Mani' Habash Shurayd al-Tu'mah
Suhayl 'Abd-al-Samad 'Abd-al-Razzaq Al Ishaq
'Abd-al-Salam 'Abd-al-Wahid Ghadban al-Baydani

Hudham 'Abd-al-Majid Yusuf al-Salim

Fourth Constituency:

Yunus Raghib Hammadi al-Sa'd
'Abd-al-Salam 'Abd-al-Muhsin 'Armash al-Maliki
'Adnan 'Abd-al-Latif Ni'mah al-Badran

Dhi Qar Governorate:

First Constituency:

Habib Muhan Jubayyir al-Ghazzi
Najat 'Ubayd Muhaysin al-Husaynawi
Mu'ayyad Hamad Sulayman al-Nasrallah
Yas Khudayyir Jabburi al-Karwi

Second Constituency:

Mushalwash 'Ikab Farhud al-Fandi
'Abd-al-Latif 'Abd-al-Sattar 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Safi
Muhammad Hannun Shu'ayl al-Asadi
Muhammad Mankhi Mahdi al-Nashi

Third Constituency:

'Abd-al-Sattar 'Abd-al-Amir Muhsin al-Jabbari
Bashir Hamid Mujayfi al-Rukabi
Sharif Karim Kazim al-Yasiri
Baqir Jawad Julayyikh al-'Awwadi
Arkan Hamid Muhan al-Khayrallah

Babil Governorate:

First Constituency:

Radi Hasan Salman Hassun
Dr. Khuddayyir Wahid Husayn al-Murshidi
Wahhab Sa'id Hadi al-Zuba'i
Layla Ibrahim 'Ali al-Khafaji
Hasan Husayn Jawad al-Hamidi

Second Constituency:

Ibrahim Kalil Ibrahim al-Ma'muri
Khalaf Tayih Harran al-Juburi
'Adnan 'Abd-al-Mun'im Rashid al-Janabi
Sa'd Hamid Hadi al-Ma'muri

Third Constituency:

Dr. Rasim Musayr Jasim al-Shammari
Ahmad Murad Muhammad al-Mansuri
Qasim 'Alwan Latif al-Hasnawi
'Amir Qutran Sughayyir al-Khafaji

Diyala Governorate:

First Constituency:

Ghazi 'Abd-al-Majid Qasim Muhammad
Husam Qasim Nusayyif al-'Azzawi
Sa'di Jasim Muhammad al-Jurani
Sa'd Hamid Mulla Jawad al-Tamimi
Majid Zaydan Kazim al-Zuhayri

Second Constituency:

Ya'rub Fadil Hasan al-'Anbaki
Nizar Habib Khayzaran al-Khayzaran
Riyadh Hadi 'Awdah al-Rubay'i

Third Constituency:

Usamah Mahmud Muhammad Abu-Khumrah
Basil Isma'il Salih al-'Azzawi
Rif'at Ibrahim 'Abd-al-Baqi Ahmad
Mazin Ahmad Hasan al-Nu'aymi
Hasan Ibrahim 'Abbas al-Mahdawi

Al-Anbar Governorate:

First Constituency:

Khamis Sirhan Bashir al-Muhammadi
Hikmat Muhammad Samir Shallal al-Muhamadi
'Amir Hasnawi 'Ifan al-'Isawi
'Amir Rashid Muhammad al-Jumayli

Second Constituency:

Nasrallah 'Abd-al-Karim Mukhlif al-Fahdawi
Kurdi Rashid Muhanna al-'Alwani
Muhammad 'Awdah Mutlaq al-Dulaymi
Hamid Turki Zayn al-Dulaymi

Third Constituency:

Qasim Muhammad al-Raddam al-Mawla
Muhammad Khalil 'Ali 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Hudaythi
'Abd-al-Muttalib Hamid Salman al-Nidawi

Salah-al-Din Governorate:

First Constituency:

Khalid Amin 'Ali al-Nasiri
Jasim Husayn Hummad al-Juburi
Khalid Shihab Ahmad al-Duri
Wisam Sami 'Abdallah al-Bayyati
Salih Muhammad Mahmud Abu-Khumra

Second Constituency:

Dr. Jasim Khalaf Salih al-Ahbabi
Muhammad 'Abd Khalaf al-Samarra'i

Saqban 'Abdallah Muhammad al-Mukadmi
'Abd-al-Razzaq Hasan 'Ali al-Hashmawi

Al-Ta'mim Governorate:

First Constituency:

Fatimah Hazza' Rashid al-Bayyati
'Adnan Hamad 'Abd-al-Ghaffur al-Nu'aymi
'Adnan Dawwah Hajji al-Hadithi
Thabit Sarmad Nuri Zuwayyid
Sufyan 'Umar 'Ali al-Nu'aymi

Second Constituency:

Dr. Hasib 'Arif Nayif al-'Ubaydi
Satam Hamad Khalaf al-Juburi
Humud Khalaf Salih al-Juburi
Nuri Muhammad al-Hamad al-Sa'dun

Al-Najaf Governorate:

First Constituency:

Nahidah Tushi Jabara Bani-'Akbah
Muhammad Ja'far Musa al-Khudayri
Jawad 'Abd-al-Amir Hasan 'Abbud
'Ali Ni'mah Hadi al-Hulw
Ramiz Hashim Muhsin al-'Athari

Second Constituency:

Hamid Hasan Jiyad al-Hatimi
Dr. Bashir Humud Kazim al-Ghazali
Salah 'Abd-al-Mahdi Jabr al-Fatlawi
'Abd-al-Rahim Hatim Hasan al-Shamikhi

Al-Qadisiyah Governorate:

First Constituency:

'Imad 'Ayyal Mutar al-Rashidi
Mahdi Hasan Shati al-Shabbani
Walid Khalid Muhammad al-Badr
'Ala' Nasir Hamad Abu-al-Juss
'Ali Maqtuf 'Abd-al-Husayn al-Zamili

Second Constituency:

Numas Hamid 'Abd-al-Husayn al-Yasiri
Nabil Muhammad Kazim al-Khuza'i
Jamal 'Abd-al-Zahrah Manthur al-'Athari
Khalid Sha'lan Sirhan al-Khaza'i

Wasit Governorate:

First Constituency:

'Aziz Salih Hasan al-Khafaji
Yasir Hasan Sultan al-Zarkani
Hamad 'Arif Hamad al-Sa'dun
Dr. Ja'far 'Abd Kazim al-Mayyahi
Zakiyyah 'Alwan Zanbur al-'Abidi

Second Constituency:

Musa'd Mahmud 'Ayiz al-Shammari
Khalil Humud Smaysim al-Shammari
Sahib 'Ubayd Shahin al-Shammari
Ma'd Jasim Mizhir al-Zubaydi

Maysan Governorate:

First Constituency:

Zaki Muhammad al-Sa'idi
Musa 'Abid Habas al-Lami
Fadil 'Abbas Musa al-Battat
'Abd-al-Wahid Miz'il 'Abd-al-Karim al-Lami

Second Constituency:

'Ali Khalaf Minqash al-Bahadili
Husayn Jabr 'Abdallah al-Maliki
Sa'd Muhammad 'Urabi al-Muhammadawi

Karbala' Governorate:

First Constituency:

Tamwin 'Ajil Samarmad al-Mas'udi
Hamid Karim Kazim al-Kalkawi
'Adil Rustum 'Awdah al-Yasari
Muhammad Khudayyir 'Ubbayyis al-Da'mi

Second Constituency:

Dr. Zuhayr 'Abd-al-Amir 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Juburi
Husayn 'Abd-al-Amir Zubalah al-Mas'udi

Al-Muthanna Governorate:

First Constituency:

'Abd-al-Amir Hasan Hani al-Hassani
Shalash Ruzuqi Rwayhi al-A'ajibi
Kazim N'imah Jiyad al-Jayashi
Hadi Rahim 'Ajlah al-Dali al-Jayashi

Iraq: Saddam Commends Election Committee Efforts

JN2503212996 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 2035 GMT 25 Mar 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] Leader President Saddam Husayn, may God protect and preserve him, chaired

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination

the Cabinet's 13th session. Participants listened to a briefing by 'Izzat Ibrahim, Revolution Command Council [RCC] vice chairman and chairman of the Higher Commission Supervising the Elections, on the progress of the fourth National Assembly elections, which were held 24 March, and the election results.

The leader president welcomed the citizens' awareness and enthusiasm about exercising their right and duty in this democratic process to choose their representatives for the fourth National Assembly, despite the difficulties created by the unfair embargo against our dear country. This fact, he said, confirms the people's belief in democracy and their interaction with the march of the revolution.

The leader president praised the efforts by the RCC vice chairman and chairman of the Higher Commission Supervising the Elections and his comrades on the commission. He also praised the efforts of those who worked at the polling stations in Baghdad and the various governorates, districts, and subdistricts.

The cabinet also discussed economic conditions. The president said the time of the embargo is now, God willing, diminishing, thanks to Iraqis' perseverance and creativeness. He said that this fact, along with the rise in the value of the Iraqi dinar, will positively influence the national economy and strengthen our people's steadfastness in confronting the consequences of the unfair embargo and continuing construction.

The cabinet also assessed the campaign to harvest and market the wheat and barley crops for the 1995 season. The leader president stressed the need for a precise assessment, because such an assessment will reflect on the entire agricultural process for these two crops. He said this assessment must be based on the clear relationship between the productivity of a single donum [4,000 square meters] and the actual supply of grain to the official supply centers.

His excellency praised the efforts of the Higher Agricultural Committee and the joint official, party, and mass organizations to ensure the successful marketing of the wheat and barely crops. Noting the efforts of these committees, the president said the seriousness in applying the law, as well as awareness, will encourage citizens to comply with the law and apply it in a positive manner.

The leader president stressed the need to filter and examine seeds in accordance with the required scientific standards to improve the grain harvest.

The cabinet discussed the items on its agenda and made the necessary decisions.

Iraq: SAIRI Releases Statement Rejecting Parliamentary Elections

NC2503175296 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI] has emphasized that the so-called National Assembly elections held in Iraq yesterday are a helpless conspiracy aimed at achieving domestic and external goals. The Iraqi regime is holding the elections because it is eroding and cracking, and popular wrath against it is growing. This came in a statement released by the SAIRI international relations department today. The text of the statement follows:

The Saddam regime is staging another theatrical chapter by holding elections for a new session of the so-called National Assembly on 24 March. The goals and methods of this maneuver have been exposed. This National Assembly has never enjoyed any credibility or substance. All previous National Assembly sessions have never been known to adopt one genuine position. It has always served as a cheap tool in the hands of the ruling gang. It has always lacked real and free will that expresses the nation's views. It has consistently served as a forum to pass down the policies of Saddam and of the so-called Revolution Command Council, which controls all decisionmaking, including the legislative tasks. For this reason, the National Assembly has always been viewed with derision and laughter by the Iraqi people. It has never enjoyed the people's confidence.

The current elections are taking place amidst political and security repression. The regime is not holding these elections out of faith in the people's role or self-confidence. The elections do not denote any change in the way the country is run. The elections aim at achieving domestic and external goals because the regime is eroding and cracking, and popular wrath, rejection, and opposition are growing. The elections are also aimed at covering up the regime's failure to convey any democratic aspect to itself. The regime's lies about political plurality and giving freedoms have been exposed as shown by the latest bloody and physical liquidations within the ruling machine itself.

The elections and their results will remain useless for our people because they lack any real power. Human rights rapporteur (Max Vanderstein) stressed in his latest report that there is no freedom or political change in Iraq. He also noted that repression has increased and that Iraq is dominated by a limited number of the family members of tyrant Saddam, who enjoys absolute power.

The international community must denounce the parliamentary elections as it did the farce of referendum

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination

because they lacked normal and genuine bases and because our people's basic demand is total change. Our people are required to shoulder their responsibility toward the absurd parliamentary elections. The people will determine their method of expressing their position from their experience with the regime, despite repression and forgery as was shown in the farce of the referendum several months ago.

The elections will in no way affect the people's position, which rejects the regime and elections. The elections cannot address the deterioration of all aspects of the country's situation that is ruled by this gang. The forces will remain steadfast in the barricades of struggle in defense of our people's rights.

Iraq: Saddam Husayn Visits Shiite Imam Tomb in Samarra'

JN2203201696 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1815 GMT 22 Mar 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Leader President Saddam Husayn, may God protect him, visited the tomb of his great grandfather, Imam 'Ali al-Hadi [the 11th Shiite imam], peace be upon him, in Samarra' District.

As soon as the visitors of the blessed shrine learned of his excellency's visit, thousands congregated to welcome his excellency. They raised their hands to welcome the offspring of the honorable family of Prophet Muhammad.

After his excellency performed the rituals of the visit to the tomb of Imam 'Ali al-Hadi, peace be upon him, he beseeched God to grant our people fortune and blessing, to strengthen their determination to face the embargo imposed by the evil ones, and to crown with victory the Iraqis' perseverance and struggle to raise the word of God, with which they embroidered their flag.

His excellency forced his way with great difficulty through the crowds of his people, who were vying to shake hands with his excellency at the gate of the blessed shrine. He greeted thousands of our glorious people, who were shouting long live to his excellency and who were reaffirming the pledge to remain faithful to principles and to continue to walk the path of victory behind their pioneer toward the shores of victory, the beloved leader Saddam Husayn, may God protect him.

On his way back, his excellency's car was stopped several times by the Iraqi families, who came to visit the tomb of Imam 'Ali al-Hadi, peace be upon him. Leader President Saddam Husayn, may God protect and preserve him, also visited al-'Ashiq Palace [the lover's palace; an ancient site] in Samarra'. He was received by the people, who gathered as soon as his excellency entered the palace yard. Following a tour of the site, his excellency stood at the balcony of al-'Ashiq Palace to greet the people, who were waving to his excellency in a demonstration of the feelings of love between the people and their leader.

After leaving al-'Ashiq Palace, his excellency forced his way with great difficulty through the crowds of our people, who rushed to greet his excellency and shake hands with him. Leader President Saddam Husayn, may God protect him, listened to some citizens as they were presenting their grievances to him. His excellency spent a long time meeting with the citizens. He gave instructions to take the necessary measures to resolve some of these grievances. People who presented grievances that were not in line with the law, were convinced after talking to the president that their grievances were truly unjustified and that the measures taken in this regard were correct.

Despite the strong winds and the rain, the grounds of al-'Ashiq Palace were packed with Iraqi families, who were singing and uttering cries of joy to express their happiness for meeting with the beloved leader. They also shouted long live the president. They beseeched God to protect him and our beloved Iraq, to defeat the rancorous ones, and to crush evil and those who advocate it.

Iraq: Al-Basrah Security Center, Governor's Office Reportedly Attacked

JN2503161196 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1325 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Providing new details on the bold jihad operation that was carried out on 16 March, mujahidin sources assert that guided missiles were used to attack the tyrant's Security Directorate and the military governor's office in the city of al-Basrah. The explosion wounded one of the building's guards, as well as two of the tyrant's security men. It also caused severe damage to the two buildings.

The sources said the bold operation caused confusion within the governorate's authority, which set up checkpoints inside the city and cordoned off al-'Ashshar area. The tyrant's Security Directorate was put on alert. It remained silent and tried to prevent reports of the heroic attack from spreading.

Israel: Peres on Elections, Peace Process, 'Wild' Countries

TA2503160296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1400 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres says the whole Middle East peace process is at stake in the May elections. He says the Labor Party will continue peace talks with the Palestinians, Syrians, and Lebanese while the Likud will stop them. The prime minister fielded questions at the opening of the 45th International Press Institute [IPI] general assembly at a Jerusalem hotel. Steve Linde has the details.

[Begin recording] [Linde] Answering a question from a journalist at the IPI Congress in Jerusalem, Prime Minister Peres said the future of the peace process to a large degree hangs on the results of the Israeli elections.

[Peres] Much will depend on the results of the elections in Israel. As a political man, I have to win the elections, and there is a certain logic how to win the elections. If we shall win the elections, and I hope we shall, we shall continue the peace process with the Palestinians. We shall continue to negotiate with the Syrians and the Lebanese. And we shall leave no stone untouched in order to spread the message of peace and the policies of peace.

[Unidentified correspondent from Nigeria] Prime Minister, listening to you and listening to your counterpart from the Likud Party, one would find out that there is a wide margin with regard to the peace process in the Middle East. Is it safe for one to assume that reelecting you means your people are approving the peace process and reelecting the Likud Party means disapproval of the peace process?

[Peres] You know, the Likud is claiming, for example when it comes to Syria, that you do not have to make any territorial compromises. Suggest peace for peace. If you are a great believer in it, then it is okay. The Likud says that you can return and put on new settlements. If you think it contributes to peace, it is okay. From my perspective, the Likud is continuing to negotiate with itself. That is the reason why they are so brilliant.

[Linde] A Turkish reporter posed a question about Israel's closure of the Gaza Strip and West Bank.

[Unidentified Turkish correspondent] Do you really think it is effective? To what extent do you think it will be effective in preventing terrorist attacks in the future?

[Peres] Well, to prevent terrorist attacks you have to have a very wide range of measures. This is one of them. Now the closure, let us not forget, is basically on workers, because supply goes on, trade goes on. And I do believe that if the Palestinian Authority [PA] will take the proper measures against terrorists, and may I say they have started to do so at least over the last fortnight or three weeks — they are very serious on it; and if they will do it then we can change many things. What we are telling Mr. 'Arafat and the PA is not that 'Arafat will become the defender of Israel or that 'Arafat will become a servant of Israel. Nothing whatsoever. Our attitude toward the Palestinians is an attitude of respect. They have a self-government. We respect their self-government. The only thing what we are telling Mr. 'Arafat is that we expect him to do what the president of Egypt is doing in Cairo. What the king of Jordan is doing in Amman. Namely not to permit additional armed forces to act on their own. We do not accept the idea like in Lebanon, for example, that there will be two governments. One will hold the microphone and the other will hold the trigger. I mean one can shoot and the other can talk. I told Mr. 'Arafat: Look, democracy is a very simple proposition. You can have 10 parties provided you have one rifle. But if you want to make one party and there will be 10 rifles, you will not know government and we shall not know peace. And I think only now the PA started to recognize that the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the Islamic Jihad are a danger to them no less than to us. So I hope that if we shall coordinate our efforts and get rid of terrorism — because I believe the PLO got rid of terrorism — we can attain the goal.

[Linde] Peres was asked by another Nigerian journalist for Israel's reaction to a report that Libya was building an underground chemical weapons plant. This was his answer.

[Peres] Well, there are obviously at least three countries, maybe three and a half countries in the Middle East, who are running wild, and that is Iran, Iraq, and Libya. They kill, they cheat, they lie, they murder. They support every subversive movement. They are trying to get hold of nonconventional arms. Israel alone cannot do the job of a policeman. What we have to do is to build a wide coalition in order to stop those countries from going crazy. If we shall have the proper coalitions we shall not have to bomb. You can do it by economic means. And, I know the United States and some other countries are trying to create such a coalition, for example around Iran or around Iraq, and eventually around Libya.

[Linde] The International Press Institute Congress on the future of the Middle East continues this week with addresses by the president, the foreign minister, the mayor of Jerusalem, the chairman of the Likud, and the ambassadors of Egypt and Jordan. [end recording]

Israel: IDF General Announces Further Arrests in West Bank

TA2603073296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Major General Gabi Ofir, the commander of IDF [Israel Defense Forces] forces in Judaea and Samaria, said that since the recent wave of terrorist attacks, the security forces have foiled organized attempts by terrorist groups to carry out attacks. Over 400 people suspected of hostile terrorist activities have been arrested, mostly Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] members.

Maj. Gen. Ofir told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that he is in favor of destroying terrorists' houses and deporting agitators. He said every suicide terrorist should know that his family will suffer if he carries out an attack.

At a meeting with Palestinian Police officials, Ofir demanded that they take action against preachers in the mosques, erase seditious graffiti from the streets, and launch an information campaign supporting the peace process in schools and colleges.

Early this morning, the IDF arrested 10 persons suspected of hostile terrorist activity and confiscated inflammatory material. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the arrests were carried out in the Janin, Tulkarm, Bethlehem, and Hebron areas within the framework of activities against Hamas.

Israel: Savir Meets U.S. Ambassador, Officials on PA Jobs

TA2503162296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] This afternoon, Foreign Ministry Director General Uri Savir held meetings with several officials to formalize an emergency plan to create thousands of jobs in the territories. The plan will be discussed with the Palestinians.

Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that, among others, Savir met U.S. Ambassador Martin Indyk; Terje Larsen, coordinator of UN activities in the autonomy; Finance Ministry Director General David Brodet; and the ambassadors of the EU troika.

Major General Oren Shahor, coordinator of government activities in the territories, complained to the Palestinian Authority [PA] that it is not taking steps to help Israel ease the closure. Security sources told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that, in view of steps the PA has taken, the departure of the chronically ill for treatment in Israel is being delayed, and the introduction of goods and raw materials into the Gaza Strip through the Qarni crossing is being held up. The sources said the Palestinians failed to keep their promises to make the necessary security arrangements at the crossing.

Israel: Shin Bet Director Replaces Head of Security Department

TA2503172696 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 25 Mar 96 p 13

[FBIS Translated Text] Shin Bet director 'Ami Ayalon yesterday appointed H. to head the Shin Bet security department. H. is replacing D., who resigned following the assassination of late Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin.

H. (47) is considered an experienced professional in the security field, where he spent most of his professional service. H. started off as a security guard for the national carrier El Al.

H. was made acting head of the security department immediately after D.'s resignation. He received an official appointment a few days ago.

D. was the only Shin Bet official to resign following Rabin's assassination, after the Shin Bet head set up a commission of inquiry. The commission sent D. a warning letter, asserting that he "had not taken the required steps to adapt the security department's activities to the conditions which ensued following death threats on the lives of the officials it was in charge of protecting. This is in view of the information accumulated by the Shin Bet."

Israel: Yatom's Role as Mosad Chief Previewed

TA2303154196 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (LESHABAT supplement) in Hebrew 22 Mar 96 pp 18, 19, 26

[Article by No'omi Levitzky: "The Mosad Dani Yatom Is Getting"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The serious events in south Lebanon made Major General Dani Yatom put aside slightly the natural emotion that gripped him. By and large, his appointment as head of the Mosad is a dream come true. Without fighting, in fact, without any real competition, Yatom managed to get the desired job. Although he has not yet formulated a piggyback plan (he is waiting for Peres to submit his appointment to the cabinet), one thing he knows for sure: He wants a long period of methodical piggybacking.

Yatom is well aware of the vast complexit? of the job and organization he will be joining. "I have a lot to learn," he said this week, "and I pray to have the skills and tools to carry out this weighty mission properly."

In his three years as the prime minister and defense minister's aide-de-camp he came to know the organization up close. He coordinated between the prime minister and all the intelligence branches and was a member of the Head of Services Committee (HSC). Nevertheless, Yatom knows that there is a big difference between knowing the organization from the outside without having any responsibility and what is awaiting him now.

He wants — boy, does he want it — to be remembered as one of a few Mosad chiefs who successfully brought the organization up a rung. He wants that because he has a big ambition to succeed and leave an imprint, but also because he knows how much this is needed.

"Yatom can and must restore the prestige the organization had," a former senior Mosad official says. "He must reassess missions, concepts, and objectives. He must carry out a reorganization, and the key to it is choosing the right people. There are fantastic guys there, and if he has the right advisers he will succeed."

Yatom is getting a slightly battered Mosad. The atmosphere in the organization is rather gloomy, and morale is low. Recently it took some serious blows when a couple of good men left and two senior officials died of serious illnesses. One of them, "Kukla," was a brilliant head of operations. Hence, Yatom's first task will be to rehabilitate the organization. [passage omitted]

Asked to explain his philosophy about teamwork, Yatom once said: "I build my working team the same way a football coach builds his. There is the offensive end, who is the spearhead, and there is the defensive end, who is the back-up."

The mythical aura surrounding the Mosad did not come out of the blue. Every fiasco was followed by a successful operation, and for every successful operation reported there were dozens that nobody read or heard about. Nevertheless, the James Bond-like glamour enveloping it has faded. In recent years it lost a lot of its clout and influence, and consequently, it was debunked from the top position it held in the intelligence community.

Those familiar with Yatom know that he will make a real effort to put the Mosad back at the top and that when Yatom does something results are seen. The rival Intelligence Branch and Shin Bet will yet feel it in their flesh. To understand this phenomenon it is enough to look at the way he metamorphosed the job of aide-de-camp. This is usually a very powerful, but mostly technical position. In his three years on the job, slowly and quietly, Yatom turned the aide-de-camp's office into a very important hub in the prime minister's bureau. Instead of being merely a coordinator, the aide-de-camp became an involved and even influencing factor. Maybe that is why so many people are keen to take the job left vacant.

Yatom, aged 51 and born in Netanya, joined the General Staff's elite command unit and was its deputy commander when Ehud Baraq was its commander. In the famous picture of the raid of the hijacked Sabena plane in 1972 he is seen standing on the wing. Later he transferred to the Armored Corps, was a brigade and division commander, and was then head of the Planning Branch in the General Staff and commander of the Central Command.

Two of his brothers also followed security-related careers. One is an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] colonel, the other is a senior defense establishment official currently on leave before retirement.

From a young age Yatom had a distinct talent for the exact sciences. He studied mathematics, physics, and computer science at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Incidentally, he inherited the textbooks from Baraq. Although he did not choose an academic career, his studies helped and will yet help him a lot. CIA Director John Deutch, a graduate in the same field, found a common language with him, and the two became friendly.

He became particularly friendly with U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry, another mathematics and physics graduate, whom he addresses as Bill. The two first met at a dinner hosted by Israeli Ambassador Itamar Rabinovich in Washington. "We met when Bill Perry was still the assistant secretary of defense and I went to Washington with Rabin. Luckily, I was seated next to him at dinner," Yatom recounted. Yatom and Perry talked the whole evening about mathematics, physics, supercomputers, and arms development and became friends. This warm friendship may now prove very helpful.

Yatom is a very neat, extremely meticulous, and painfully pedantic person. He wears a crew cut, his uniform is always tip-top, and there is never a speck of dust on his shoes. He reminds you of a Prussian soldier. He was always considered a square and was the butt of endless jokes in the IDF. When his appointment was announced, some smilingly observed that the Mosad office building would probably turn square now.

However, the years spent in the prime minister's bureau seem to have softened him and widened his horizons. He is a very hands-on boss who gets involved in the most minute details, almost a nudnick, but he has a very systematic mind, rapid grasp, and infinite ambition to excel.

He developed an exceptional relationship with the late Yitzhaq Rabin. When he inherited the defense portfolio from Moshe Arens he also inherited Yatom, then a brigadier general, as his aide-de-camp. They took to each other like ducks to water, and soon they had a powerful chemistry going on between them. Later, when Yatom ended his job as commander of the Central Command and Rabin already was prime minister, he took him back into the warm lap of his bureau.

Here is where Yatom started to build his power. He entered a bureau plagued with disputes, conflicts, power struggles, and competition for the prime minister's favor. Yatom discerned the potential, and slowly began taking over powers. If the classical job of an aide-de-camp is to be a liaison between the big boss and the security and intelligence branches, then Yatom was more than that. He became the nerve center of the prime minister's bureau.

Yatom ogled the political arena, and shortly became the exclusive hub in this area. He was involved in all the secret contacts with Jordan prior to the signing of the peace agreement, he accompanied the prime minister on all his secret meetings, and he made some secret trips of his own. Later Rabin let him in on the officers' talks with the Syrians, and ultimately even appointed him to head the Israeli team to the talks. As days went by Yatom accumulated more and more power and clout. And, this should be stressed — he did so in a pleasant manner, without quarreling or acquiring any enemies. Unusual.

Rabin trusted him almost implicitly, and he became his confidant and right-hand man. Surprisingly, after Rabin's assassination, within a short period of time and having known each other very little, Yatom managed to gain the confidence of the new prime minister. Shim'on Peres cannot stop praising him. He reports everything, tells me everything, does not forget anything, is aware of priorities, and is absolutely reliable, Peres says.

Peres, who has not exactly been thrilled about the Mosad in recent years, expects Yatom to resurrect its past glory in the organizational, strategic, and intelligence sense. As Peres sees it, the Mosad's primary duty is to collect information; this is its raison d'etre. [passage omitted]

Yatom is looking forward to a fascinating yet not entirely easy period. He knows he will have to redefine the Mosad's priorities, missions, and structures, and adapt them to the changes in the world. Except for the prime minister's guidelines, the head of the Mosad enjoys leeway and freedom to set priorities. Iran, for example, will probably top Yatom's list. Terror and Tehran's nuclear race will yet make him lose sleep.

To put some color back in the Mosad's cheeks, Yatom will have to find the niche that will help regain its supremacy; he will have to use any crack to wheedle it back into the nerve center where the real important issues are happening. As we said, Yatom is a whiz in this field, but he is up against fierce competition.

Fighting terror, the issue topping our national agenda today, and anything having to do with the Palestinian autonomy are currently the domain of the Shin Bet. Yatom will probably try to stick his foot there, but he will run up against fierce resistance from the Intelligence Branch, the central intelligence body and the largest organization in terms of budget and manpower. The Intelligence Branch is currently headed by Major General Moshe Ya'alon, a former subordinate of Yatom, while the Shin Bet is headed by 'Ami 'Ayalon, a friend and pal. It will be interesting to follow the relations developing among this trio.

The Intelligence Branch is also in charge of national analysis. Those who know Yatom find it hard to believe that he will let go of such a tempting dish.

In a meeting a couple of months ago I asked Yatom whether he was the kind of person who must always feel in control. There is something there, Yatom replied, I feel better when the issues I am in charge of do not slip between my fingers. And who decides what issues you are in charge of? I do, he answered.

People in the Mosad say generals are used to giving the order to fire, and then the cannon fires. But here it does not work that way, they note. "Here you need more sophistication, since we have to use brains rather than force." Yatom can only smile. In this respect, the Mosad has not yet begun to learn what he has already forgotten. Yatom has already shown his hand as an imperialist. After all, he has refined encroachment and made it into an art.

Israel: Mosad Weaknesses Viewed; Changes Recommended

TA2203161396 Tel Aviv TEL AVIV in Hebrew 22 Mar 96 pp 50, 51

[Article by Ran Edelist: "A State Organization Seeks Repairman"]

[FBIS Translated Text] An odd thing has happened to the media. The Mosad chief resigned amid loud groans from everyone around him, and yet the entire Israeli media, which is usually adept at making much ado about nothing, has been as silent as a clam. Isn't this the same dreaded Mosad described by foreign sources as an organization pulling hidden strings all over the world? And yet the Israeli media, besides recycling several trite truths, has been unable to deal with the Mosad head's retirement in the usual journalistic manner.

By the way, he is a respectable guy of the old school, and his main problem as head of the Mosad was his political-level unsuitability to his era. His lack of suitability applies also to the administrative level, where people should be appointed on the merit of their skills, and not their loyalties. Even the founders of the new counterterror command did not consider him capable of making a contribution, and appointed Shin Bet Chief 'Ami Ayalon to head it. Considering the present Mosad head's sensitivity to his standing as the head of HSC, the Heads of Services Committee (comprising the Intelligence Branch, Shin Bet, Police, and Mosad), he should not be too elated by his becoming subordinate to the head of the counterterror command. Incidentally, reliable sources maintain that the fact that the HSC has been meeting in the Mosad head's office is due to the better quality of the sandwiches served there, rather than to the Mosad head's eminence in the intelligence community.

S. is not as bad as he may seem, despite his failure to become a rising star in the Israeli intelligence arena. Yet since he failed to adapt to the national and international turnabouts, his retirement may become the turning point the Mosad has needed for many years.

A few weeks ago, Peres visited the Mosad. The atmosphere was decorous — that is to say, the usual platitudes were exchanged against the background of the resentment deriving from the Mosad chief's view of Peres. His opinion was voiced publicly when Peres was foreign minister and the two men operated under the umbrella of unity government Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's bushy eyebrows and Smurf-like peals of laughter. There has been no romance since.

Beyond the personal problems and related gossip, the Mosad chief plays a totally marginal role in the great historic move of a new Middle East creation. To be more precise, he is simply not in on it. One could ask in this context what else is new and what is the meaning of this preelection reshuffling, but the fact is that even if the present Mosad head has not been helping the prime minister to promote the process, he could still obstruct it, should he decide to conduct activities not coordinated with the major muscle flexing designed to ensure the survival of the peace process.

In recent history, the Mosad was one of the radical bodies that fought the Arab enemy. It was not a political act, but rather a natural process of taking orders and of national motivation and accumulated expertise, as well as a general quality of esprit de corps intrinsic to the Mosad since its inception. Even during the period of the Madrid Conference, when even the Likud government was coerced by the world into pretending to be marching toward a political compromise, Efrayim Halevi, then head of the Mosad's political branch, publicly announced his complete skepticism regarding the Syrian desire to attain peace. He described the Oslo agreement as a disaster. Even when the political process acquired a momentum, the Mosad heads — most notably S., during whose term the political process became reality — failed to inculcate the major changes in the world and the region into the heads of those in the Mosad's middle levels. "You know," Peres told Les Aspin, Clinton's defense secretary, "there is not a single thing these Mosad guys have predicted, not a single thing. They told us 'Arafat would never agree to any arrangement, and that King Husayn would not budge before al-Asad. Everything was proven to be wrong."

Reality is even stronger than the Mosad's esprit de corps, and 'A, the new head of research, is tagging along like Minister Yosi Beilin's best friend. What happened was that the Mosad itself was relegated to the status of a mediocre intelligence-gathering mechanism and jack of all trades.

Dani Yatom, the new head of Mosad, faces some considerable tasks. First, he must adapt the Mosad's structure and assignments to the spirit of the times. The Mosad has never undergone an orderly process of restructuring adapted to the changes that have occurred in the world and in Israel. Although the outgoing head started off by promising reorganization, in practice he turned out to be a zealous conservative.

The political department is the most problematic. As someone who spent years in the corridors of political power, Yatom is the right man to distinguish between the Mosad's clandestine and overt diplomatic activities. One only need hope that in addition to his insight, Yatom will also prove strong enough to execute his policies from the organizational and personal perspectives.

The research department is another section that can expect to be shaken up. After the Yom Kippur War, a research department was formed, which later began preparing assessments as well. The accumulated experience of intelligence bodies proves that their assessments are more indicative of compliance to a politician's demands than objective analysis. Ever since A. served as the deputy of Nahiq [not further specified], who ran the Lebanese war on behalf of the Mosad, and until A. resigned as head of research, the Mosad's Research Department pursued an aggressive assessment policy which served the Likud governments well, especially when Efrayim Halevi, who was later to become head of the political branch and assistant Mosad head, was head of the research department.

When the political process began, the Mosad was the most skeptical of all the intelligence services and waged such a battle against the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] Intelligence Branch that the head of the latter had to silence Research Department head A. at a cabinet session on security affairs. The new Mosad head may initiate a total separation between the organization and the research department. There are even those who say that the responsibility for preparing strategic assessments may be transferred to the Foreign Ministry or the IDF Intelligence Branch. In general, veteran intelligence officials like Rafi Eytan say that "the moment the Mosad is asked to present assessments, it clouds its way of thinking which should be purely operational. The Mosad must provide pinpointed information. It may add the requisite conclusions; however, the Mosad should not be allowed to present situation analyses."

At the time, Binyamin Netanyahu told the late Yitzhaq Rabin that as head of the opposition with over 50 percent support in the polls, he did not want to see far-reaching personnel changes in sensitive positions, including that of the head of Mosad. Rabin typically stood on principle and limited the tenure of the Mosad head to five years. Rabin, however, agreed that this principle would only apply after S. retired. S. told Rabin that he still had some important things to do.

That was a lame, transparent excuse, but Rabin, again typically, simply relented when it was finally time to tell someone to pack his bags. Besides, Rabin always feared that the new Mosad chief would be even worse. He chose not to make waves and to be surrounded by familiar faces.

Moreover, the incoming Mosad chief is assuming his post in the aftermath of a trauma which proved that we can not only be hit by the long vengeful hand of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad, but also by our own.

As far as the operative level goes, S. leaves behind a Mosad that knows how to work and is used to cooperating with parallel units outside the Mosad. However, its long-standing internal problem has been its seriously flawed debriefing and review procedures. There has never been a real review process in the Mosad. Operations have always ended with a sigh of relief. Successes generated letters of gratitude, while failures ended in cover-ups. In a meeting with Mosad department heads after the Cyprus fiasco (when a Mosad team was caught in the lobby of the Iranian Embassy by a sleepy Cypriot policeman), S. said it had been a "borderline" case. No heads rolled, not even that of the head of the team, who was put out to pasture in the Training Department. No lessons were drawn, other than writing a report, even when a Mosad man was caught red-handed in Moscow.

In this respect, Dani Yatom arrives in the Mosad preceded by his reputation as a stickler for such issues dating back to his service in the General Staff's elite commando unit as Ehud Baraq's deputy. The first problem Yatom (just like any outsider appointed to any organization) will encounter is the immediate group of people with whom he will be working. In his case, these clearly will have been chosen by S., who appointed only his own men as heads of departments and sections. All his workers realized that a top criteria was personal loyalty and total obedience.

The problem is that most senior workers are only at the beginning of their tenure, except for A., whom S. plucked out of retirement to work in the sensitive area of information gathering. B. was recalled from overseas, and so was 'A., who was appointed head of research. L. was fired because he did not tow the line set by S., and after the late Moish "Kulka" Levin (a good friend of S.) passed away, I. was appointed head of the Operational Unit. 'A. is the bottleneck in the senior forum. S. did not pick out an assistant, but appointed her as his deputy and his obvious second-in-command.

S. appointed D., his successor in the Operational Unit, to head the Political Department and to be his future heir. In the face of constant efforts to appoint outsiders, the Mosad has a long-standing tradition whereby the chief fights to have his replacement come from the ranks. S. himself was appointed after Nahum Admoni, the previous chief, fought for him tooth and nail. Likud members, such as Ehud Olmert, who thought S. was one of their own (perhaps due to his wife's family) favored him. Even Isar Har'el [Mosad chief in the early 1950's] lobbied for him with then Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir, and he won the appointment against then Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's recommendation to appoint to the job Amnon Lipkin-Shahaq, the current chief of staff.

Continuing the same tradition, S. supported the appointment of D. as his successor. Today D. is the most senior, experienced, and talented department director, but when he began polishing his political act in order to run against an outsider he clashed with the quasi-acting deputy 'A. Later on he realized that the woman was keeping him out of positions that had at one time been filled by Efrayim Halevi and would have helped him consolidate his candidacy. The involvement of 'A. in the appointment of section heads recently triggered a small riot, when as a result of her direct intervention,

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and disseminating

section head X. (who was coming up for a promotion) was passed over by section head Y., the word being that the factor that had tipped the scales was personal loyalty to S.

Recently D. threatened to quit his job and the Mosad after he learned that S. backed up 'A. and had no intention of appointing him as his assistant and official second-in-command. D. is a good man, devoted, and so on. The word is that he did an excellent job as head of the Operational Unit, and the assumption is that his appointment as second-in-command would keep him next to Yatom to uphold operational continuity and internal hierarchy.

Yatom's appointment will do away with the current custom, whereby the name and picture of the head of the Mosad are kept secret. It has been known for years that there are no operational motives to bar the disclosure of the man's name, and that if the Mosad chief were to be harmed in any way, God forbid, he would fall in the line of duty just as any regular soldier. Nobody demands to conceal the names of IDF soldiers and officers who are in much closer contact with the enemy than the head of the Mosad, unless it is a question of pure field security, which is not the case with the head of the Mosad, who is very well known in the international diplomatic and intelligence community, not to mention the Internet.

Israel: Peres Hailed for Conduct in Terror Crisis

TA2603091696 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 26 Mar 96 p B1

[Commentary by Yo'el Marcus: "The Trial of the Burning Coals"]

[FBIS Translated Text] We were not very far from a painful and large-scale military operation in Lebanon one night last week. As everybody saw on television, the army moved large troops to the north as jet fighters and helicopters flew constantly in the sky. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] was ready to operate, and the political level was prepared to provide the required cabinet approval, but Shim'on Peres did not give the order — not just yet. Instead, like any politician in distress, he lashed out at the media, saying it would not tell him when and if to operate as if such decisions were made by the media.

The lethal attacks staged by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Hizballah put to the test Peres' ability as prime minister to perform under pressure and in a crisis. Such a test two months before the elections, as political rivals Ari'el Sharon and Refa'el Eytan (Netanyahu's right- and left-hand men) felt free to spew bellicose advice without taking any responsibility, is the ultimate nightmare. Another person in the same situation might have followed his gut feeling and acted immediately and forcefully against the two organizations to attain immediate popularity. The public loves machos, at least until this position begins to translate into body bags. Peres needed a great deal of courage and poise not to cave in to the calls for revenge from the street and instead use his brain rather than follow his gut. He did not forgo the use of force, but chose to reserve himself this option as a last resource.

A single motive guided Peres' conduct in the face of the Hizballah and Hamas attacks: To be assertive and be prepared to use force, but not to be dragged into a situation where he would lose control over the other side's response. The intense wave of attacks in south Lebanon proved that the understandings of Operation Accountability, interpreted by Hizballah as a license to wage war against the IDF with no holds barred, urgently needed amendment.

However, rather than launch a large-scale operation which would have led to the collapse of all the understandings and necessitate their rephrasing based on our demands, Peres initially tried to attain the same goal through political means. Our experience in Lebanon taught us that we know how to get into a war there but not how to get out of it. Therefore, if the same goal could be attained without once again sinking in the mud and incurring casualties better to try it.

It wasn't "American pressure" that stopped Peres. What got the United States involved in containing the fire in the north was Peres' appeal to bring its influence to bear on Syria to curb Hizballah. At best, the administration's efforts may prove successful, and then we will have saved human lives. At worst, if Hizballah continues to attack and Israel retaliates with a military operation, then at least the administration will have been convinced that we were left with no other choice. As he tries the political way, Peres comes across as not being afraid to use force. The experienced Peres is totally devoid of the Pavlovian urge to go for his gun. He is determined — at least this is his behind-the-scenes pose — that if the political move fails Israel will no longer put up with another Hizballah attack without a strong military retaliation.

Following the Hamas bombings Peres also decided not to cave in to the public demand for revenge, which ranged from sending the tanks into Gaza to erasing whole villages in the West Bank from the face of the earth. Instead he took a series of harsh measures which did not lead to the collapse and downfall of the peace process with the Palestinians. If we cannot catch the fish, then let's dry the sea, one of his advisers says. In other words, reduce Palestinian public support for the terror by exerting pressure on it. The closure, house demolitions, the threat of deportations, the suspension of the talks, the threat not to pull out of Hebron, the curfew and arrests in the West Bank were all meant to force the Palestinian Authority and its leader to take more resolute action against the terror.

Similar to the tradition of some African tribes where men prove their virility by walking on burning coals, at his advanced age Peres finds himself having to prove the thesis that masculinity is multifaceted. However, in the test of the burning coals a very fine line separates giving the impression that he is behaving with aplomb and thoughtfulness and the feeling that he is hesitant and has a hard time making up his mind. The way he manages the terror crisis in the next two months is what will really substantiate Labor's election motto of "A Strong Israel With Peres."

Israel: U.S. Embassy Rejects 'Amir Family Visa Request

TA2503162196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1400 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The United States Embassy in Tel Aviv has turned down a visa request from the brother and sister of Yig'al 'Amir, who is standing trial for the assassination of Yitzhaq Rabin.

The 'Amirs said they wanted to raise the money for the defense of Yig'al and his brother Hagay, but the embassy is reported to have rejected the request, suspecting they may wish to settle in the United States.

Jordan: Al-Mu'ashshir Cited on Iraqi Diplomat Expulsion, Camps

JN2503173596 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1700 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jordan has said it expelled an Iraqi diplomat and declared him persona non grata for activities incompatible with his diplomatic status. Information Minister Marwan al-Mu'ashshir told reporters that Assistant Press Attache at the Iraqi Embassy in Amman Husayn Faraj was expelled for acts that contravened diplomatic norms. During his weekly meeting with the media, the minister also said Jordan did not know if its ambassador in Baghdad was being harassed by the Iraqi Government. He denied that Jordan intended to set up camps for Iraqis on its borders and said there was no need for such camps.

Turning to Middle East peace, Dr. al-Mu'ashshir reiterated that Jordan supported peace talks on all Arab-Israeli negotiating tracks. He said Jordan was not content with Israel's collective punishment of Palestinians in the self-rule areas and added the closures there were an impediment to peace.

Jordan: Iraq, Abu-Nidal Reportedly Planning Attacks Against Jordan

JN2503180496 Amman AL-HADATH in Arabic 25 Mar 96 p 4

["Exclusive" report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] Ranking Jordanian security sources told AL-HADATH that security authorities discovered that groups linked to Iran have smuggled weapons into Jordan. Investigations of members of these groups confirm that these weapons were to be used to carry out military operations in two directions:

1. Operations against Israel launched from Jordan in revenge against Jordan's policy and its role in the peace process.

2. Operations inside Jordan primarily targeting tourist facilities as a consequence of growing talk about the role of tourism in boosting the Jordanian economy. These operations were also aimed at diverting Jordan's attention from its regional and pan-Arab role in relation to Iraq and keeping it preoccupied with domestic security problems.

AL-HADATH's sources confirm that security authorities managed to abort the first stage of the scheme before it could be implemented. The security authorities are now preparing to confront the next stages, which are calmly being planned.

Over the past few weeks, there have been shooting incidents along the Iraqi-Jordanian border. This prompted the authorities to send a memorandum to Iraq asking for an explanation about the incidents.

Iraq responded to the Jordanian memorandum, saying that Baghdad is not responsible for practices by what it described as smugglers of goods between the two countries. However, security authorities linked these incidents and the waves of collective desertion by Iraqi soldiers, who used to cross the Iraqi-Jordanian border from time to time.

It later became clear that many of those who crossed the border sold their weapons in Jordan. After some of them were arrested and interrogated, it became clear that they had come to carry out acts of sabotage against Jordan. [passage omitted]

It is clear that the Iraqi leadership began to look for a new scenario. Information leaked to AL-HADATH confirms that Sabri al- Banna, also known as Abu-Nidal [leader of Fatah-the Revolutionary Council], recently reached an agreement with Iraqi intelligence in Tehran.

According to this agreement, government and media officials are to be assassinated and bombings are to be carried out in public places to terrorize citizens.

AL-HADATH's sources said the two sides agreed that Abu-Nidal will receive $3 million for the operations he will carry out. The ranking security sources added that relations between Abu-Nidal and Baghdad have not been severed, despite talk that their relation had become lukewarm since the second Gulf crisis and war. The two sides have always been eager not to harm cooperation in the security and intelligence fields.

This information has led to the Jordanian-Iraqi and Jordanian- Syrian borders being placed under close surveillance. It has also led to the monitoring of people with links to Iraqi intelligence and groups that belong to Abu-Nidal, who split from Fatah and formed an organization known as the Revolutionary Council. Abu-Nidal has been linked to bombings and assassinations in European and Arab capitals. [passage omitted]

Jordan: Daily Claims Iraq Tried 'To Disturb' Jordanian-Palestinian Ties

JN2203170796 Amman SHIHAN in Arabic 23-29 Mar 96 p 7

[FBIS Translated Text] Although there is conflicting news about the Jordanian-Palestinian dispute following the Palestinian charges that Jordan was giving refuge to Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the planners for the recent explosions in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Ashqelon, the information obtained by SHIHAN revealed that the Jordanian-Palestinian dispute was caused when an Iraqi Foreign Ministry official leaked information that a member of the Jordanian House of Representatives handed over funds to Hamas for the families of those who carry out suicide operations.

Sources said that the Palestinian Authority asked Jordan about the accuracy of the information it received from the Iraqi official. The Jordanian Government replied that the information was false and baseless and demanded evidence about the information.

The sources said that the Jordanian Government was surprised by the Iraqi official's behavior, who was said to have conveyed this deceptive information to disturb Jordanian-Palestinian relations. The Jordanian Government emphasized that it condemns all forms of terrorism regardless of the source, and said this information was aimed at sabotaging Jordanian-Palestinian relations and to implicate Jordan in supporting terrorism.

Meanwhile, in a telephone contact with SHIHAN, the Iraqi Embassy said this information is false and baseless, and said it aims at distorting Iraq's image among the Jordanian and Palestinian public.

Jordan: Israel's Beilin Says Closure 'Not Solution Forever'

JN2503215296 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 2000 GMT 25 Mar 96

[Interview with Israeli Minister Without Portfolio Yosi Beilin by Dimah Hamarinah in Amman on 25 March; from the "News at Ten" program — recorded]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [Hamarinah] Do you think that the increased security measures by Israel recently, including the decision yesterday to maintain the closure, would encourage more violence, rather than put a stop to it?

[Beilin] The truth is that we all understand the difficulties of the closure, and it is not our intention to make the life of the Palestinians who live in Gaza or in the West Bank unbearable. That is why we are trying to do our best in order to open up for humanitarian cases, for hospitalization in Israel, for food, for trucks going in and out of Gaza — import and export from Gaza. The main problem now is to enable workers to work in Israel. That is the biggest impediment. And as long as we are not sure that on the other side, in Gaza itself, there are no more threats of suicide bombers, it will be very, very difficult for us to open up.

[Hamarinah] But can you guarantee, can Israel ever guarantee that there is no threat of more violence? Does that mean the closure will be indefinite always?

[Beilin] The closure cannot be indefinite. It is not a solution forever. It can be a solution only for a very short while. And I am sure that there is a limit for that. The fact that there is no specific date does not mean that one can go on with it forever. But I would say that the intensification of the threats is such today that it is impossible for us to open it 100 percent.

Jordan: Columnist Warns Peres Against Continuing 'Unjust' Measures

JN2403212496 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 24 Mar 96 p 18

[From the "Highlights" column by Dr. Fahd al-Fanik: "Slow Down, Peres"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli upheaval over the bombings that killed dozens of Israeli citizens in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv is understandable. Israel's unrelenting war against Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] or the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Battalions, which have declared war on Israel, is also understandable. However, we do not understand the war that Israel has declared against the entire Palestinian people — in towns, villages, and camps — or the collective punishment that makes no distinction between the guilty and the innocent. As for the revenge against the families of the suicide bombers, the arrest of their relatives, and the blowing up of their homes, it contravenes the simplest rules of human rights in a state that claims to be democratic.

A full month has passed since a nuclear power declared a fresh war against an unarmed people before the very eyes of the civilized world, which is playing the role of a spectator. Had these atrocities been committed in Iraq or Sudan, the UN Security Council would have met immediately and issued denunciations and warnings, and all human rights organizations and supporters of democracy would have risen in protest.

We in Jordan who made peace with Israel and denounced all forms of terrorism cannot stand idly by while Israel kills the Palestinian people. There is nothing in the [peace] treaty that cancels our Arabism, numbs our feelings, or prevents us from taking a stand dictated by our Arab affiliation and human conscience.

If Peres wants to prove that he is no less aggressive than his adversary in the elections, then he is playing a losing game. The section of Israeli public opinion that demands aggression against and oppression of the Palestinians and a halt to the peace process will not vote for Peres, but for the candidate who is more capable than he is in doing this job.

If Peres thinks he can take the Jordanian people for granted, he mistaken. We cannot condone the killing of innocent Palestinians. We, who supported the treaty and the peace strongly and without hesitation, find ourselves facing an invitation from Peres to reconsider everything.

If the collective punishment, the unjust closures, the blowing up of homes, the torture of innocent people, and the deportation operations do not cease, then we will have no other option except to apologize for our pro-peace position toward Israel when there is no peace. We are not neutral as far as Israel and the Palestinians or the neo-Nazism and its victims are concerned. Israel must realize that by launching a war against an Arab people and blowing up their homes, it is, in effect, blowing up the very foundations of the peace process.

Jordan: Editorial Questions Israel's 'True Intentions' Toward Peace

JN2303145496 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 23 Mar 96 pp 1, 20

[Editorial: "Does Israel Really Want Peace?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinians, the Arabs, and the entire world are condemning acts of violence and extremism and the assault on the security and lives of innocent civilians. They are denouncing the bloody bombings that are far from logic and the principles of Islam. At this time, one cannot accept the Israeli inhuman measures against the Palestinian people and the punishment of an entire people for the behavior of individuals or limited and illegitimate groups.

The economic closure, the siege on the Palestinian people, the demolishing of houses, and deportations cannot be explained as measures to confront and restrain extremist acts. On the contrary, these measures will lead to a painful reaction from Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip who find themselves between the Israeli hammer and the anvil of extremism and counter violence.

What could Israel reap from continuing the suffering of an entire people under siege as long as authorities in Israel and the Palestinian National Authority themselves are doing their utmost to end the activities of extremist groups and their elements? Do these measures serve the peace process and push it forward based on building bridges of understanding, coexistence, and mutual confidence?

The increasing Israeli intransigence and the failure to pay heed to the calls on the Israeli Government to end the closure and siege are raising questions about Israel's true intentions and its use of the recent bombings to slip away from its commitments to implement the requirements of the peace process based on the Oslo and Cairo agreements. What also raises questions is Israel's delaying of the final stage negotiations with the Palestinians to discuss substantive issues related to the Palestinian situation, such as Jerusalem, the settlements, borders, security, refugees and other issues, which, if resolved, will achieve real peace in the entire region.

Through the recent legislative elections, the Palestinians have shown that they support peace and a peaceful solution. Meanwhile, Israel's measures and practices and the propaganda campaigns for the Israeli legislative elections due to be held in May cannot in essence be a practical inclination toward peace but toward more obstacles and complications in the entire peace process.

If the Israelis want to prove their true intentions, then ending the closure and stopping demolitions and deportations will be an important indicator of this and will constitute a response to questions that began to be raised in the political arena. Does Israel really want peace?

Lebanon: Buwayz—Bush Visit Shows U.S. Officials Can Travel 'Safely'

NC2503175696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz said that he believes contacts held last week, in which U.S. officials and others participated, have helped calm the situation in south Lebanon. He said that the visit to Lebanon by former U.S. President George Bush shows that there is interest in Lebanon and that it is possible for a U.S. president or official to visit Lebanon safely.

In response to a question on his apprehension about a qualitative Israeli military operation against the resistance, Buwayz said that it is impossible to determine whether or not such an operation will take place in Lebanon or elsewhere.

Lebanon: Radio Reports on Bush's Visit to Region, Program

NC2603080596 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Former U.S. President George Bush will arrive in Lebanon today and will be President Ilyas al-Hirawi's guest in B'abda. Bush, who was former U.S. President Ronald Reagan's vice president when the decision banning Americans from travelling to Lebanon was issued in 1985, will discuss with President al-Hirawi ways to revoke this decision. U.S. Ambassador Richard Jones has downplayed the significance of the visit as far as getting any results in this regard are concerned. He revealed that the U.S. Embassy will provide logistical support for Bush during the visit.

Bush's visit will be brief and secret. This visit by former U.S. President Bush, who will be President al-Hirawi's guest at B'abda Palace, is being kept out of the limelight. According to the sketchy information available, the former U.S. President will arrive this afternoon from Damascus. He will hold talks with the president, the Chamber of Deputies speaker, and the prime minister at the B'abda Palace. President al-Hirawi will host a luncheon in his honor as well as a folklore party, featuring artist Majidah al-Rumi and the Romeo Lahhud Group. It will be Bush's second visit to Lebanon. He visited Beirut in 1983, when he was President Ronald Reagan's vice president.

[Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic at 0530 GMT on 26 March adds the following: "President Ilyas al-Hirawi has discussed with Information Minister Farid Makari media coverage of the visits to Lebanon by French President Jacques Chirac and former U.S. President George Bush."

[Hizballah's radio, Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic, at 0630 GMT on 26 March states: "Former U.S. President George Bush will arrive in Beirut from Damascus today on a short visit to Lebanon as part of a tour of the region.

["A U.S. diplomat has pointed out that the U.S. Embassy in Beirut will provide only logistic assistance to Bush during his visit."

[(Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic at 0545 GMT says: "Let us start with the visit by former U.S. President George Bush to Lebanon, where he will be the guest of President Ilyas al-Hirawi at the B'abda Palace.

["Prior to the visit, in an interview with Bahrain television, President Bush called on the international community to coordinate efforts to wipe out terrorism. The world must move against terrorism, unite, and take the necessary measures to end the training, direction, and arming of international terrorists, he said. President Bush visited Saudi Arabia, the Sultanate of Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, and Bahrain. He will conclude his tour in Syria and Lebanon."]

Lebanon: Dallul Interviewed on Israel's Objectives in Lebanon

JN2603110596 Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 22 Mar 96 pp 30-33

[Interview with Lebanese Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul by Yusuf Diyab in Beirut; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Diyab] Do you believe that Shim'on Peres' statement on a possible surprise withdrawal from southern Lebanon may create a loophole or undermine the joint Syrian-Lebanese position toward the peace process?

[Dallul] Israel cannot separate the Lebanese and Syrian tracks. The idea of separation was used for maneuvering purposes to which the foreign minister replied. Israel can withdraw at any time it likes. We have no problem. But Israel wants to ignite a second war in Lebanon because it is upset by progress in Lebanon and by our efforts to rebuild what Israel destroyed such as the airport, the sports city, and the electricity, water, and telephone networks.

It is our priority to rebuild what was destroyed by Israel. Israel wanted to cancel Lebanon's future role. We are eager to achieve that goal. Peres announced that he wanted to explode the situation in Lebanon. But all the parties that dealt with him discovered the wicked goal of his statement.

[Diyab] What will Lebanon do if Israel carries out military operations in southern Lebanon, how can it help citizens there, and to what extent will it use military power?

[Dallul] Your question is strange. We have a capability. Am I supposed to tell you about our capability? We will defend ourselves with all our capabilities, and we are alert to that. Israel's mechanism is well known and dangerous, but we always depend on our spiritual culture and martyrdom. We believe that any Israeli operation will be costly. Therefore, Israel should calculate because it always pays for its operations. However, we will do our best.

[Diyab] Will Israel repeat the 1993 invasion?

[Dallul] I do not think so, because Israel paid a dear price for that invasion, and thus, it will not repeat it.

[Diyab] What about the future of Hizballah in particular, and the nationalist resistance in general, if Israel withdraws?

[Dallul] Hizballah represents a major political current in the country. It is not linked to the resistance. The resistance was created as a result of the Israeli occupation, and Hizballah assumed the responsibility bravely, made sacrifices, and paid a dear price for this resistance. Based on this, we will have firm relations with Hizballah in the future based on mutual trust. Hizballah represents a political current which has its own dimension. It is not only linked with the resistance.

[Diyab] There are analyses and interpretations that Hizballah is linked with the Iranian influence in the country. How true is this?

[Dallul] In politics and media, you can always find some sides which want to embarrass this or that political party by saying that it has connections to this or that party. This also applies to Lebanon. So, if Hizballah maintains relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, then this is natural. However, Hizballah is a Lebanese party which has representatives at the Chamber of Deputies. It has its own dimensions.

[Diyab] Regarding the martyrdom operations which were carried out in the occupied territories, do you think Israel will react to them in southern Lebanon, in addition to what is taking place there?

[Dallul] This is possible. However, what is the justification for such reaction. If the martyrdom operations were carried out inside the Israeli entity, why should it accuse Lebanon?

[Diyab] But does Israel consider these operations an extension to a foreign policy from Lebanon, Sudan, or elsewhere?

[Dallul] Why is this? Is this not a result of its policy? Had it decided to achieve peace, it would have spared its people all this. It should be serious and sound about peace. However, it is impossible for it to have peace, land, rights, and dignity together. It is either land-for-peace, a just and comprehensive peace, or no peace. Why do Palestinians carry out martyrdom operations? Because they feel that Israel is humiliating them. Israel has not even implemented the Oslo agreement. It has thus far not withdrawn from the cities, something which should have taken place a year ago. Its policy encourages such operations.

[Diyab] But according to published analyses, it seems that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] is seeking to torpedo the peace process?

[Dallul] We have no connection with Hamas or other parties. We have an occupied territory and a resistance to end this occupation. We have no connection with the operations of Hamas or other parties. We proceed from our national and general interests. Our territory is occupied an it is our natural right to defend our independence and sovereignty and to confront this occupation.

[Diyab] It is said that the peace process may collapse all together, especially since the United States declared war to side with Israel after the recent operations. Can this affect peace in the long term now that Israel suspended the negotiations with Syria?

[Dallul] This is possible, but who will lose? Here we must examine what will happen in the region. If peace fails, then everything will be over. Our territory is occupied. All the tracks will fail and the relations which Israel established with the Arab states will also fail. You cannot cripple one part of the process and keep the rest intact. First, the people will feel that they have the right to defend themselves and their dignity and to resist occupation. Thus, all of us, not only in Lebanon, but in all Arab states, will be part of the extremist front. The interests of several states will be threatened. Let us recall how the Soviets entered the region. The Soviets entered when the Americans tried to humiliate 'Abd-al-Nasir when he was seeking a party to finance the building of the High Dam. There was an offer of finance from the World Bank, but when the United States tried to humiliate 'Abd-al-Nasir the offer was withdrawn. The Soviet Union then offered to finance the High Dam and entered into the region. It established an influence in all states, both friends and enemies of the United States. [passage omitted]

Syria: Iraqi Opposition Parties Meet in Damascus, Issue Communique

NC2503172996 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraqi opposition has emphasized that armed struggle and field action are the only way to get rid of the dictatorial regime sitting over the Iraqi people's chests.

This came in the final communique released at the end of a meeting held among the Iraqi opposition parties in Damascus last night.

The Iraqi opposition representative said representatives of the Iraqi opposition parties meeting in Damascus discussed a field plan proposed by the conferees and ways to bring down the 'Aflaqite regime. The conferees stressed the need to utilize the difficult situation of the Baghdad regime, in light of fast-paced collapses and retreats, and the regime's liquidation of security, intelligence, and Republican Guard personnel.

In their statement, the Iraqi opposition representatives denounced the farce of parliamentary elections that the 'Aflaqite regime organized today.

Syria: Commentary Urges End to Israeli 'Mockery' of Peace

JN2503182196 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1236 GMT 25 Mar 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: After he assumed the prime minister's post in Israel, Shim'on Peres made a series of statements that focused on the importance of peace. In these statements, Peres stressed his determination to continue with the peace process, giving it first priority, even over the elections, although they are important.

At the time, Peres' statements were received with great optimism by international circles interested in achieving peace in the Middle East. However, in light of our experience, we could not help but doubt the credibility of Peres' statements and await future developments or signs to either reinforce the hope that the peace train is back on the right track and abiding by the Madrid bases or to transform or doubts into fact, proving Israel will not change its policy even though it has a new prime minister, will not relinquish its policy, and will continue to oppose real peace.

To help things become clear, Syria offered another chance, added to the tens of chances it has already offered, in the hope that Israel would use it to show that its prime minister's statements are not mere talk dictated by circumstances, but are an expression of a sincere desire and determination to continue on the path of the just peace in accordance with the resolutions of the international legitimacy No. 242, 338, and 425 and with the U.S. initiative that is based on the land-for-peace formula. This chance was also offered to show that only peace can guarantee all sides' security, interests, dignity, and rights.

Regrettably, the rounds of the Syrian-Israeli talks that were held in the U.S. State of Maryland, which were encouraged by Peres' statements, did not produce positive results, just like the previous rounds that were held over the four years after the Madrid conference. This is despite the fact that Israel has had three prime ministers since the Madrid conference.

This shows that Israel has never been serious about working for a just and true peace. Needless to say, Israel's repressive and oppressive measures in the occupied territories and the escalation of its daily aggressions against Lebanon constitute unequivocal proof of its adherence to a stand that completely conflicts with peace, the resolutions of the international legitimacy, the U.S. initiative, and the Madrid terms of reference, bases, and pillars.

Based on this, the international community, particularly the peace cosponsors, as well as all the influential powers involved, should now realize that the Middle East crisis has become too serious to be ignored or unresolved. The international community's refusal to tackle this process with all of its resources and achieve a true and just solution will lead to dangers that reach far beyond the region and reflect negatively on world peace, security, and the interests of all people.

Seriousness about facing the challenge of peace can end Israel's mockery. We do not believe that flattering Israel will prevent it from continuing its hostility to peace. On the contrary, it will continue its policy, with all its dangers, if the international community does not wake up and contain the danger before it spreads and becomes impossible to contain after it is exacerbated and explodes.

Syria: Press Warns Against 'Sympathy' With Israel

JN2603094696 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0550 GMT 26 Mar 96

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] TISHRIN warns against continuing to support Israel's aggressive policy. The paper recalls Israel's daily practices in the occupied Arab territories, which are accompanied by a campaign of hate against Arabs.

TISHRIN asserts that the real causes of tension in the region were clouded by the competition to show solidarity with Israel. The paper says Israel is the cause of tension and obstruction of the peace process.

TISHRIN adds: Israel used the campaign of sympathy with it to set new conditions for negotiations with the limited self-rule authority, thus violating the principles reached in the Oslo deal. Israel's growing intransigence is also evident in reports about new conditions set by it to resume the negotiations on the Syrian track. Israel halted these negotiations and is now seeking to drown them in fresh, impossible marginal issues. The purpose of this is to obstruct any progress on this track. At the same time, Israel escalates its aggressive practices against Lebanon and wants actions against it from Lebanon to stop.

TISHRIN asserts that the manifestations of intransigence in Israeli policy are primarily the result of Israel's belief that the international community stopped its attempts to force it to withdraw and recognize the rights of the Palestinian people. Israel also feels that the international community is covering up for its policy of aggression and expansion by finding excuses for the continuation of its suppression and terrorism.

The paper warns that the growing tendency to strengthen international solidarity with Israel's aggressive policy will drown the region in a new wave of violence. Israel's continued policy of suppression and oppression is bound to foster feelings of revenge and drown the region in a sea of blood, destruction, and tragedies.

TISHRIN adds: Anyone who thinks that resistance can be uprooted while maintaining occupation is mistaken. It is also not possible for Israel to enjoy security and stability while the other party feels that it is deprived of its basic rights. A just peace that is acceptable to the people is the only way to achieve security and stability in the region.

TISHRIN concludes: Supporting Israel's aggressive policy can never promote peace in the region. This is a hard fact. Anyone who wants to end the current cycle of violence must pressure Israel to withdraw its forces from the occupied Arab territories and to acknowledge the Palestinian people's legitimate rights. However, encouraging the aggressive bent in Israel's policy, patting the shoulders of Israeli settlers, protecting them, and portraying them as victims will not contribute to real peace. This will increase tension and the threat of explosion in the region.

In its editorial, AL-BA'TH blames Israel for the obstruction and halt in the Middle East peace process and for the continuation of tension, chaos, and violence in the region. The paper affirms that this situation is basically the outcome of Israel's aggressive, expansionist policy in the occupied territories and southern Lebanon.

AL-BA'TH adds: Peace for Israel is nothing more than a cheap, tactical maneuver, despite all of its allegations and claims to the contrary. Developments over the past few years prove this fact. Israel made feverish efforts to empty the peace process of any substance and meaning. Israel also refused to make any public commitment to Security Council resolutions on the peace process.

AL-BA'TH says: Israel worked to achieve peace in return for peace; that is, it wants to get everything from the Arabs without offering anything in return. Israel is today turning the whole peace process into a demagogic election campaign, one-upmanship about settlement building, and aggressive threats. Israel is brushing aside all concepts and principles on which the peace process was launched.

AL-BA'TH concludes: Israel, however, is mistaken if it thinks it can achieve its premeditated intentions to undermine the peace process or shape it in accordance with its interests and concepts. The peace process, regionally and internationally, is an irreversible option and a hard reality that Israel cannot deny or overlook, no matter how much it tries. Israel may obstruct, evade, or sabotage the negotiations, but sooner or later it will have to yield to this option and fulfill its obligations in full.

In a commentary, AL-THAWRAH speaks about the living conditions of Palestinians in the occupied Arab territories. The Palestinians have been experiencing siege and starvation for almost a month. They are living in a large prison, deprived of freedom and dignity. Their land, existence, and means of livelihood are targeted.

AL-THAWRAH asserts that this tragic situation can only breed further rancor and hatred, exacerbate the status quo, and increase tension, violence, and bloodshed.

In another commentary, AL-THAWRAH says: Israel has worked for four and a half years to derail the peace process from its proper course. Israel wants to make the Sharm al-Shaykh conference and the meetings of the follow-up group a factor to assassinate the Madrid conference and prevent it from being a frame of reference for the desired peace. Israel wants to market the Sharm al-Shaykh statement to serve as an alternative frame of reference.

AL-THAWRAH adds: The Israeli attempt to derail the peace process and prevent it from achieving its major objectives poses a real threat to the just and comprehensive peace which the United States called for and for which negotiations are held in accordance with the U.S. land-for-peace initiative.

The paper concludes: Out of its eagerness to keep the peace process on the right track, Syria urged the peace sponsors, America and Russia, to resume the Madrid peace conference, since it is the primary and real frame of reference. This is meant to save the peace process so it can achieve its noble objective.

Syria: Former U.S. President Bush Arrives in Damascus 26 Mar

JN2603102896 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0815 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Former U.S. President George Bush arrived in Damascus this morning on a visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. He was received at Damascus International Airport by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, U.S. Ambassador in Damascus Christopher Ross, and U.S. Embassy officials.

Syria: President al-Asad Receives Chinese Delegation

JN2503204296 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1640 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 25 Mar (SANA)—President Hafiz al-Asad received a delegation from the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Council at the People's Palace at 1100 today. The delegation was led by Qian Weichang, vice chairman of the committee.

Muhammad Zuhayr Mashariqah, vice president and vice chairman of the Central Command of the National Progressive Front, attended the meeting.

Weichang conveyed greetings from Chinese President Jiang Zemin to al-Asad and an invitation to visit China. The president accepted the invitation and promised to respond to it at the appropriate time. The president also asked head of the Chinese delegation to convey his greetings to President Zemin.

The conversation dealt with the delegation's visit to Syria, its talks with Syrian officials, its impressions about the visit, and relations between the two countries.

Weichang expressed his satisfaction with the talks he held in Syria. He admired Syria's achievements under the leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad. He said that China supports Syria's stands and the Arabs' right to restore their occupied land and legitimate rights.

The president said the Syrian people appreciate the Chinese people's struggle and China's support for the rights of Syria and the Arabs and that they care about the traditional relations of friendship between the two countries.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Taleban Missile Attacks Injure 4 in Kabul

LD2503165396 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Benazir Bhutto's Taleban carried out missile attacks on Kabul city again today. BAKHTAR reports that six missiles hit residential areas of Kabul city and injured four people.

In addition to killing 16 people, yesterday's missile attacks by the Taleban on Shahr-e Now also martyred five members of one family and injured another five of the same family in [words indistinct].

Today's missiles also destroyed a number of houses.

Afghanistan: Hekmatyar, Kabul Discuss 'Possible Accord'

BK2603081396 Hong Kong AFP in English 0745 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ISLAMABAD, March 26 (AFP) — Senior leaders of Afghan faction Hezb-e Eslami have been meeting since early this week to discuss a possible accord with the beleaguered government in Kabul, faction sources in Pakistan said Tuesday [26 March].

Meetings of the faction's executive committee have been taking place at Jalalabad in the east of Afghanistan, these sources said.

For several weeks there have been suggestions of a military and political alliance between the faction, led by Golboddin Hekmatyar, and the regime of President Borhanoddin Rabbani.

The groups, although at one stage in alliance, have been violently opposed to one another for more than two years.

Diplomatic sources and Afghan sources have indicated that a new accord was agreed roughly two weeks ago, although faction spokesmen deny this.

The accord, these sources say, forsees a political power-sharing agreement and a military alliance between the Hezb-e Eslami and the Rabbani regime against the Taleban — the "students of religion", now well dug in to the south of Kabul and laying seige to the Afghan capital.

Since January 1994, the Hezb-e Eslami has been in an alliance with ethhic Uzbek warlord Rashid Dostam, who controls territory in the north of Afghanistan, and with various moderate factions within a "Supreme Coordination Council", opposed to the Kabul regime. An accord between Rabbani and Hekmatyar could be expected to put a de facto end to this alliance.

The progress of the Taleban, who in October reached the gates of Kabul, has considerably weakened the power of the Hezb-e Eslami. Last year it was forced to abandon its positions south of the capital swiftly to avoid being caught between the Taleban and Rabbani's forces.

Hezb-e Eslami and Rabbani's regime were allied from March 1993 to January 1994. Following accords signed in Islamabad in March 1993, Hekmatyar was given the post of prime minister, although in reality he has never carried out this position's functions.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: Zia Calls For End to 'Chaos'; Opposition Leader Comments

BK2603043296 Hong Kong AFP in English 0412 GMT 26 Mar 96

[Report by Nadeem Qadir]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DHAKA, March 26 (AFP) — Bangladesh Prime Minister Khaleda Zia appealled for an end to "chaos" Tuesday after parliament passed a landmark constitutional bill to hold future general elections under a neutral government.

The opposition did not immediately comment on the move — which came on the 25th anniversary of Bangladesh's independence — but analysts said the major concession was unlikely to end its increasingly violent campaign to bring down Zia.

Parliament sat through the night to pass the bill. Parliament speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali said 268 MPs voted in favour and none against. Fifty-two MPs abstained or were absent, parliamentary sources said.

The Constitutional (Thirteenth) Amendment bill provides for an 11-member "non-party caretaker" administration to assist the election commission in organising "free, fair and neutral" general elections.

The administration would be headed by a chief advisor who would be chosen from a panel of retired chief justices or eminent persons to exercise executive power.

The bill did not order a national referendum to amend the constitution. Officials said this was to "expedite the process of forming" a caretaker government to resolve the longstanding political impasse.

Zia told parliament: "Let us be united. No more disunity, no more chaos and no more stoppages of the means of livelihood of the common men."

Zia, who has said new elections could be held as early as May, said her ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has now fufilled all its pledges and met opposition demands with the new bill.

"The bill should be implemented as soon as possible," she added, amid cheers and table-thumping by her party lawmakers, "to rescue the greater section of the nation from the present situation."

The bill will become law once signed by President Abdur Rahman Biswas.

The opposition has been demanding for more than two years that Zia stand down so new elections can be held under a caretaker government.

There have been scores of deaths in clashes between opposition activists and government supporters or the security forces. There has also been massive damage to the Bangladesh economy from a long series of general strikes.

Zia had originally said the demands were unconstitutional but the opposition action has become more radical and tension mounted after the opposition boycotted a general election held on February 15.

After Zia agreed to pass the amendment, the opposition, led by Sheikh Hasina Wajed of the Awami League said Zia must stand down and the election results cancelled before any solution to the crisis could be found.

Analysts said they were skeptical the bill would end the political conflict as the opposition appeared firm in its demands that Zia resign and annul the February elections.

Zia would resign once the caretaker government has been formed, but she would not annull the polls, they said.

The opposition has said it would not accept any bill adopted by the current "illegal" parliament.

They have enforced a "non-cooperation" camp@ign since March 9 to push their demands, but there will be no strike for two days because of independence celebrations that started Tuesday. At least 28 people have been killed since March 9.

Bangladesh: Parliament Passes 'Nonparty Caretaker Government' Bill

BK2603030196 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 0100 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Constitution 13th Amendment Bill 1996 was unanimously passed by Parliament in the early hours of this morning. A total of 268 votes were cast in favor of the bill with no one voting against it. This bill provides for the formation of a nonparty caretaker government with a view to assist the Election Commission in conducting the parliamentary elections in a free, peaceful, fair, and impartial manner. The nonparty caretaker government will be headed by a chief adviser. It will also have other advisers not to exceed 10. [sentence indistinct] The term of office of this government will be 90 days. The caretaker government will carry out routine functions and shall not make policy decisions. The caretaker government will be dissolved on the day the (?prime minister) takes office, after the formation of the new Parliament. This bill also provides details regarding the qualifications and procedures for the appointment of the chief adviser and other advisers.

Before adopting the bill, [words indistinct]. Earlier, Minister of Law, Justice, and Parliamentary Affairs Barrister Zamiruddin Sirkar, who presented the bill, submitted to the House the report of the 10-member Select Committee. The Select Committee, headed by the law minister himself, examined threadbare various provisions of the bill and [words indistinct] amendments to it. Our parliamentary representative reports that as the Speaker announced the results of the vote, members of parliament welcomed the passage of the Constitution 13th Amendment Bill by thumping their desks.

After the passage of the bill, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia congratulated the members of parliament and the people of the country on this auspicious day of the silver jubilee anniversary of the country's liberation. She said the Parliament has discharged a historic responsibility by adopting the Constitution 13th Amendment Bill. The prime minister said that she has repeatedly told all concerned that the 15 February elections will create such a congenial atmosphere that all parties will be able to participate in the next parliamentary elections. She expressed her happiness that through this amendment, she could fulfill her pledge [words indistinct].

Bangladesh: Opposition Rejects Landmark Bill, Wants Zia To Resign

BK2603054996 Hong Kong AFP in English 0539 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DHAKA, March 26 (AFP) — The Bangladesh opposition on Tuesday rejected a government bill for all future elections under a neutral caretaker government.

Zillur Rahman, general secretary of the main opposition Awami League, told AFP the opposition campaign would go on until Prime Minister Khaleda Zia resigns.

"This bill has no value to us as the (February 15) elections were illegal, so is the parliament and everything done there," he said.

Parliament on Tuesday passed a constitutional amendment allowing for all future general elections to be held with a "non-party" administration running the country.

The opposition has been campaigning for more than two years for Zia to stand down so that new elections under a neutral government can be held. It boycotted elections on February 15 that Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party won.

Rahman said the whole nation was united in wanting Zia to resign and the election results cancelled.

He added "the campaign will continue without doubt until our demands are fulfilled."

The opposition Jatiya party and fundamentalist Jamaat-e-Islami party could not be reached immediately for comment, but it was unlikely they would differ.

Bangladesh: Rocket Launchers, Mortars Seized From Fishing Trawlers

BK2503131596 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1200 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Security Forces of Bangladesh have seized a huge quantity of firearms and explosives from some fishing trawlers in the Maheshkhali canal. The firearms and explosives seized by the security forces, with the help of police and Bangladesh Rifles, includes rocket launchers, bombs, and mortars. The security forces arrested 12 foreign nationals on charges of being involved.

India

India: Reinforcements Sent To Clear Kashmir Shrine of Militants

BK2503125396 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The union home secretary, Mr. K. Padnamabhaiah, has said that Jammu and Kashmir Government is taking all steps to clear the Hazratbal shrine of the militants. In a statement in New Delhi, he said reinforcements of the Border Security Force have been rushed to help the Jammu and Kashmir Armed Police, which is providing security to the shrine. Mr. Padnamabhaiah confirmed that 10 or more armed militants belonging to the Shabbir Siddiqui group of the JKLF [Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front] has sneaked into the main shrine of Hazratbal and are holed up there. Meanwhile, the state governor, Mr. General K.V. Krishna Rao, has arrived in New Delhi for consultations with the center.

The All India Organization of Imams has strongly criticized Pakistan for its involvement in the violence in Hazratbal in Jammu and Kashmir yesterday. In a press release in New Delhi today, the president of the organization Hazrat Maulana Jamil Ilyasi said the incident only proves that Pakistan can go to any extent to disturb peace and the democratic process in Jammu and Kashmir and the rest of the country.

India: PTV Reports Gun Battle Continuing Near Shrine in Kashmir

BK2503135296 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Srinagar, the gun battle between Indian security forces and Kashmiri freedom fighters is continuing around the holiest Hazratbal shrine, and authorities have clamped an indefinite curfew to control the situation. A bloody shoot-out took place in front of the shrine yesterday, which left up to 11 people dead. Freedom fighters have called for protest and revenge against India after the shoot-out, which left one of their top commanders dead. The bodies of the freedom fighters are still lying inside the compound of the shrine. The imposition of indefinite curfew is meant to prevent the people from collecting around the shrine, because the situation can spin out of control if the mob sees the dead bodies being removed.

Meanwhile, life has been totally paralyzed in and around Srinagar following the latest killings by security forces. Shops, markets, and commercial institutions are closed, and tension continues to mount.

A spokesman of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front told reporters in Srinagar today that their topmost commander, Basharat Raza, was found dead inside Hazratbal mosque after his group was engaged in gun battle with Indian troops on Sunday [24 March]. UNITED NEWS OF INDIA has also confirmed the death of Basharat Raza but said a total of 11 people were killed in the incident.

Kashmiri freedom fighters and Indian troops have been fighting regularly for six years in Kashmir, where the Kashmiris are leading a campaign for independence from India.

An agency report from New Delhi says the clash inside the mosque could trigger off a widespread reaction against troops, as a number of relics of the holy prophet, Sallallaho Alaihe Wa Alehi Wa Sallam [May the mercy and blessing of God be upon him], are kept inside the mosque.

India: Further on Situation, Developments at Kashmir Shrine

BK2503160296 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, efforts are on to persuade the militants inside the Hazratbal shrine in Srinagar to come out along with their weapons. Officials sources said this evening that the militants have been asked to take the bodies lying inside the complex for burial. As reported, nine militants, including the self-styled chief commander of the JKLF [Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front]-Siddiqui group, Basharat Raza, were killed in yesterday's encounter with the state armed police. One policeman was also killed in the incident.

In a statement in New Delhi, the union home secretary, Mr. K. Padmanabhaiah, said according to reports available, about 10 armed militants of the JKLF managed to enter the shrine and are holed up there. He said reinforcements of the BSF [Border Security Force] have been rushed to help the state armed police providing security to the shrine.

In another development, the Jammu and Kashmir administration has issued an ultimatum to the militants in the shrine to surrender within the next two days or face (?interdiction). An official spokesman said they can surrender to the nearest police station or security post.

Meanwhile, preventive orders around the shrine are being strictly enforced, and the situation is described as being under control. Police have arrested five militants of the JKLF near the complex and recovered arms and ammunition from them. The governor's adviser, Mr. D.D. Saklani, and Director General of Police Mr. M.N. Sabharwal visited the site today to assess the situation. The state governor, Gen. K.V. Krishna Rao, is in New Delhi for consultations with the Center.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration has announced an ex gratia payment of 2 lakh rupees for the next of kin of the police subinspector killed in yesterday's encounter. The leader of the Ikhwanul Muslimeen, Kuka Parray, in a statement has criticized the attempts of the militants to desecrate the Hazratbal shrine. In another statement, the general secretary of the Jammu and Kashmir Panthers Party, Mohammad Ashraf Wani, has also condemned the militants' action.

The All India Organization of Imams [Muslim prayer leaders] has strongly criticized Pakistan for its involvement in the violence in Hazratbal in Jammu and Kashmir yesterday. In a press release in New Delhi today, the president of the organization, Hazrat Maulana Jamil Ilyasi, said the incident only proves that Pakistan can go to any extent to disturb peace and the democratic process in Jammu and Kashmir and the rest of the country.

The All India Minorities Front has also condemned the use of the Hazratbal shrine by a militant group for political gain. In a statement in New Delhi this evening, the president of the front, Mr. S.M. Asif, said the militant group which is supported by Pakistan has become active in a bid to scuttle the elections announced in the state. He demanded immediate action to free the shrine from the Pakistan-supported militants.

India: Curfew Continues in Hazratbal Shrine Area

BK2603033796 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Srinagar, negotiations with the militants holed up in the Hazratbal shrine are to begin this morning. These are likely to be taken up through intermediaries. Bodies of the four out of the nine militants killed in Sunday's [24 March] incident have been recovered so far. Efforts are on to recover the remaining bodies also. The curfew in the area continues to be in force and the situation is reported to be under control.

India: Kashmir Government Asks All Militants To Surrender

BK2603051596 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Jammu and Kashmir government has asked all the militants in the state to surrender by tomorrow with arms to the nearest police station or the security post. It has warned of severe action against those who harbor the militants or hold unlicensed arms.

The state governor, General K.V. Krishna Rao, met the prime minister in New Delhi yesterday. He briefed Mr. Narasimha Rao about the situation in the state and the arrangements being made for the coming Lok Sabha elections there. He also discussed the situation at the Hazratbal shrine.

India: Kashmir Militants Set Conditions for Talks With Delhi

BK2603045596 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In occupied Kashmir, freedom fighters who are still holding the control of the dargah [shrine] Hazratbal have set four conditions to start a dialogue with the Indian Government. The acting chairman of the Awkaf Trust [Muslim Endowment

Trust] and a mediator from Indian side said that freedom fighters have demanded immediately lifting the curfew and withdrawing troops from the area. He said they also wanted that worshipers and journalists be allowed inside the dargah.

An Indian Government spokesman said in Srinagar that they have issued an ultimatum to the freedom fighters to give up their weapons and surrender by tomorrow, but freedom fighters have spurned the call. About 2,000 Indian troops have besieged dargah Hazratbal and the Indian authorities have clamped an indefinite curfew around the dargah. Meanwhile, demonstrations were held in Srinagar and other parts of the held valley to protest against the siege of the dargah Hazratbal by Indian troops.

All Parties Hurriyat Conference has condemned carnage and desecration of the most reverend Hazratbal shrine by Indian forces. In a statement in New Delhi yesterday, the Hurriyat Conference says that the Indian troops have splattered the shrine with blood of innocent people. The executive members of the Hurriyat Conference condemned the use of excessive force and brutality against the people of Indian held Kashmir and said New Delhi is bent upon process of genocide of the innocent Kashmiris. They pointed out that massacre of Kashmiris in the holy shrine by Indian forces is yet another glaring example of New Delhi's callous and vindicative attitude toward the people of Kashmir.

India: Police Recover Bodies From Kashmir Shrine; Talks Underway

BK2603090896 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Jammu and Kashmir Administration has asked the militants holed up in the Hazratbal shrine to come out along with arms and ammunition. Negotiations through intermediaries are also in progress for the purpose.

Meanwhile, all the eight bodies of the militants killed in Sunday's [24 March] encounter have been handed over to the Jammu and Kashmir police. The police are guarding the shrine. Four bodies were handed over today. The administration has sanctioned 3 lakh rupees for the next of kin of the policemen who were also killed in the encounter. Senior police and civil officials are camping at the shrine. Curfew around the area is continuing and the situation is under control.

All the militants in the state have been asked to surrender by tomorrow. The administration has warned of stern action against those who harbor militants or possess unlicensed arms.

India: Further on Recovery of Bodies From Kashmir Shrine

BK2603091796 Hong Kong AFP in English 0840 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Srinagar, India, March 26 (AFP) — Indian troops recovered eight bodies from Kashmir's holiest mosque here Tuesday [26 March] as a standoff with heavily-armed Muslim separatists holed up inside the Islamic shrine entered a third day.

Police sources said the security forces removed the bodies of the eight men killed in a shootout with police on Sunday from the Hazratbal mosque following protracted negotiations by a mediator.

Seven of the dead were gunmen belonging to the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) while the eighth was a labourer killed in the crossfire that lasted nearly seven hours, the sources said.

"We believe there may be one or more bodies still inside," a police officer told AFP. "I am not sure."

An estimated 2,000 policemen and members of the paramilitary Border Security Force (BSF) continued to lay siege to the marble shrine on Tuesday in a bid to flush out the 20 heavily-armed JKLF militants inside.

The entire area around the lakeside mosque on Srinagar's (?outskirts was) under curfew for the second day. A woman living in the neighbourhood complained that nobody could move out of their homes.

"We can't even step out to buy milk," Naeema Akhtar said by telephone. "The BSF is everywhere... We have been warned that we must remain inside."

JKFL leader Shabbir Siddiqui said the shootout erupted at midday Sunday when Kashmiri police commandos stormed his office near the shrine and shot dead nine of his men, including the group's military commander Basharat Raza.

Two policemen were also reportedly killed in the fighting.

Siddiqui's group is a splinter faction of the JKLF, which supports independence for Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state.

Siddiqui's faction is controlled by the Pakistan-based Amanullah Khan.

Kashmir officials said the bodies of the militants would be taken to their respective homes, and that hundreds of people had gathered at Raza's village on Srinagar's edge to take part in the funeral.

Sheikh Abdul Kabir, father of a Muslim militant slain by Indian troops in 1992, was acting as a mediator with the guerrillas inside Hazratbal and urging them to surrender, officials said.

"The mediatory efforts are on," an official said. "We are hopeful."

But the JKLF refused to give in, saying the authorities must first lift the curfew, end the siege, and allow journalists and worshippers into the shrine to show goodwill.

On Tuesday, a Kashmir government spokesman said there were no plans to storm the shrine.

"If we want we could find a solution within 30 minutes," spokesman Kulbushan Jindiyal told AFP. "But we don't want to hurt religious sentiments."

The security forces on Tuesday used batons and tear gas to disperse dozens of Muslims in a Srinagar neighbourhood who clashed with police and took to the streets shouting anti-Indian slogans, witnesses said.

Srinagar and the rest of the Kashmir Valley remained paralysed by a general strike called by the JKLF to denounce Sunday's slaying of the militants.

Shops, businesses and many government offices were shut in this city of some 800,000 people. Most traffic remained off the roads, and only army and police vehicles could be seen on the streets.

The Indian army laid a similar siege to the Hazratbal mosque in 1993 after it was taken over by Muslim gunmen. The crisis ended when the separatists surrendered after 32 days.

The Hazratbal mosque, a favourite platform for Kashmiri politicians, houses a whisker which Kashmiri Muslims believe comes from the beard of the Prophet Mohammed.

India and Pakistan dispute (?ownership) of Kashmir, and New Delhi accuses Islamabad of arming and training the guerrillas. Pakistan denies the charge but gives diplomatic support to the separatist drive raging since 1989.

India: JKLF Spokesman Demands Lifting of Hazratbal Siege

BK2603122096 Hong Kong AFP in English 1212 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Srinagar, India, March 26 (AFP) — Indian troops recovered eight bodies from Kashmir's holiest mosque here Tuesday [26 March] as Muslim separatist guerrillas holed up inside demanded that the security forces lift their siege of the shrine.

"The only way out of the present crisis is for the police and paramilitary forces to withdraw from around the shrine," said a spokesman for the militant group which took over the Hazratbal mosque following a shootout on Sunday.

"We will not allow any troops to enter Hazratbal," added the representative of a faction of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), which is seeking independence for Kashmir, India's only Moslem-majority state.

The JKLF spokesman claimed that between 35 and 45 heavily-armed militants were holed up inside Hazratbal, the most sacred Islamic shrine in the Kashmir Valley. [passage omitted]

India: Situation Around Kashmir Shrine 'Explosive'

BK2603135996 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kashmiri freedom fighters still in control of the Hazratbal shrine have put forward four demands to the Indian Government for initiating negotiations on the issue. The demands include an immediate end to the siege of the shrine, lifting of curfew, and permission to the namazis [those offering prayers] and journalists to enter the complex.

According to reports, the situation in and around the complex and in the valley as a whole has been further aggravated following ultimatum by the Indian Government that the freedom fighters should surrender along with their weapons. Freedom fighters have, however, rejected the ultimatum.

Another report from Srinagar says life remained paralyzed in the occupied valley for the second day today due to protest strike. The dargah [shrine] is still surrounded by the Army and the situation in the locality is explosive. The bodies of the five of the 11 people killed in firing by Indian troops lying within the compound have been handed over to their relatives.

The All Parties Hurriyat Conference, in a statement issued after an emergency meeting in Srinagar, has warned against any attempt to turn the Hazratbal shrine into a battleground. Efforts to occupy the spiritual centers of the Kashmiris would be frustrated, the statement added.

In another development, a rocket was fired by Indian agents on the house of a senior Kashmiri leader Syed Ali Gilani, destroying its upper story. The inmates had a hairbreadth escape. The All Parties Hurriyat Conference spokesman has held the Indian Government responsible for this attack.

In New Delhi, top leaders of the Hurriyat Conference have held Indian military forces responsible for the killing of innocent people at the dargah Hazratbal. In a statement, the leaders of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference condemned the genocide of innocent Kashmiri Muslims and described it as a direct result of repressive policies being followed by the Indian Government.

India: Militants in Kashmir Shrine 'Surrendering'

BK2603143896 Hong Kong AFP in English 1432 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Srinagar, India, March 26 (AFP) — Muslim militants holed up in Kashmir's holiest shrine here for the last three days began surrendering to the police here Tuesday [26 March], a police spokesman said.

"They have started surrendering along with their weapons, in batches of three," the police officer said.

India: Delhi TV Reports Militants Leaving Kashmir Shrine

BK2603151996 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in Hindi 1500 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In Srinagar, the militants of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front [JKLF] that were holed up in the Hazratbal shrine have started coming out. Srinagar correspondent Bashir Malik reported a short while ago that the state administration spent the whole day convincing the militants to surrender.

As already reported, some JKLF militants entered the shrine after an armed clash with the Jammu and Kashmir armed police on 24 March in which eight militants and a police subinspector were killed.

India: Party Official, Six Others Killed in Bomb Blast

BK2603053096 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Uttar Pradesh, seven persons including the state unit Samajwadi Party secretary, Mr. Om Prakash Paswan, were killed in a bomb explosion near (Malhanpur) village in Gorakhpur District last evening. Three persons died on the spot while four others succumbed to their injuries in the hospital. About 50 others were injured in the blast which occurred at an election meeting. The condition of about 10 of them is stated to be serious.

The DIG [Deputy Inspector General] of police told our Gorakhpur correspondent that the blast occurred when some anti-social elements hurled a powerful bomb at Mr. Paswan and his party workers when they were getting down from the dais after addressing the meeting. The injured have been admitted to the B.R.D. Medical College Hospital and the District Hospital at Gorakhpur, and the Primary Health Center at Bansgaon.

The Samajwadi Party president, Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav, has condemned the incident and described it as a heinous crime.

India: Commission Urges Allowing Amnesty International To Visit Kashmir

BK2603153396 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The National Human Rights Commission, NHRC, has recommended to the center to allow the London-based Amnesty International to visit the Kashmir Valley. Talking to mediapersons in New Delhi today, the NHRC chairman, Mr. Justice Ranganath Mishra, said it is important for transparency, as foreign diplomatic missions have been permitted to visit the valley.

About the complaints of Kashmiri migrants, the commissioner has suggested to the government to raise the subsistence allowance to 2,000 rupees. It also wrote to the chief secretary of the state to freeze the mutation of the properties left by them.

India: Lok Sabha Elections in Kashmir Rescheduled

BK2603051896 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Election Commission has rescheduled the polls for the six Lok Sabha constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir on the 7th, 23d, and 30th of May instead of 7th, 21st of May as announced earlier. Elections will be held for two constituencies on each of these three dates. The notification for polls on these three different dates will be issued separately. The decision to reschedule the polls in Jammu and Kashmir was taken unanimously by the three-member Election Commission after a meeting late last night. The commission held the meeting on receiving a letter from the union government suggesting that the elections to the six Lok Sabha seats in the state be held in three phases instead of two as scheduled earlier.

According to a press note of the commission, polls will be held for Jammu and Ladakh parliamentary constituencies on the 7th May, for the Baramula and Anantnag constituencies on the 23rd, and for Srinagar and Udhampur on the 30th of May. The commission also rejected a proposal to reconsider holding of the elections on the 27th of next month in view of the certain representations it received. The poll schedule for the elections in the rest of the country will remain unchanged and the election notifications are to be issued tomorrow.

India: Report Details Communist Party Election Manifesto

BK2603045796 Delhi THE PIONEER in English
23 Mar 96 p 6

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] IN A sharp departure from its 1991 election manifesto, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI-M) has made no mention of the "third alternative" in the 1996 manifesto and merely asked people to vote for "CPI(M) and the Left".

The departure is significant and indicates the CPI(M)'s displeasure at the non-emergence of the "third alternative" at the all-India level.

The 1991 manifesto formally asked people to vote for the Left and the National Front alliance in at least five places but there is no such appeal this time. And coming at a time when the CPI(M) has been pressing for a "third alternative", the omission is the clearest message to the National Front that it has let the Left down.

The CPI(M)'s manifesto, released by party general secretary Harkishan Singh Surjeet on Friday [22 Mar] evening, also indicates that the Marxist party is now ready for an independent Left intervention in the country's politics.

The similarities between the 1991 and the 1996 manifestos are that both seek votes for Left, secular and democratic forces and both list more or less the same points in the CPI(M)'s election programme.

The 1996 manifesto says: "The consistent, principled and firm role of the CPI(M) and the Left in maintaining the unity of our country against all divisive and communal onslaughts is there before the people...

"Above all, in the existing morass of corruption, criminalisation and moral degeneration it is the CPI(M) and the Left that have emerged most credible.

"It is with the above record that the CPI(M) is appealing to the Indian people to rise to the occasion in these grave circumstances to defeat the Congress and the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]," it adds.

Answering questions after releasing the manifesto, Mr Surjeet, however, said the "third alternative" would emerge over the next few days.

"Even in 1977, it took barely 10 days for the Opposition to gets its act together and go to the people against the Congress," he said.

The Marxist party's manifesto, however, makes no such statements. At the end of the 17-page manifesto, the Marxist party says: "The dangers faced by the country today demand of every patriotic citizen a response that they owe both to the motherland and themselves.

"The CPI(M)'s increased representation in Parliament, strengthening of the Left in Parliament and the combination of the Left, democratic and secular forces alone can today further the struggle to face the challenge of safeguarding our country and championing the people's interests."

The CPI(M) manifesto castigates the Congress and the BJP saying the Congress has mortgaged the country's freedom by its economic policies while the BJP is out to destroy the very social fabric of India.

It is necessary that both be defeated, the manifesto adds. Interestingly, much of the manifesto concentrates on the Congress as compared to the BJP indicating the CPI(M)'s thinking that the rightist party is currently on the wane.

In its election programme, the CPI(M) has vowed to reverse Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao's economic policies to make them "pro- people".

Some of the other points in the CPI(M)'s programme are:

* Stop privatisation of the public sector and financial sector, revise telecom and power policies, streamline PSUs, provide them autonomy from bureaucratic controls and ensure workers participation in management.

* Curb price rise and ensure food security by expanding the public distribution system bringing into its ambit 14 essential commodities, reduce prices by 50 per cent, reduce issue price of food grains.

* Reverse present industrial policy, new policy to strengthen indigenous industry and domestic capacities, end to preferential treatment to foreign investors, entry of foreign capital to be decided on national priorities and technological needs.

* No amendment to the Indian Patent Act of 1970 which will erode India's sovereign right to develop domestic R&D.

* Granting of pension to working people as a third benefit, upgrading pensions of all categories of pensioners in consonance with the cost of living.

* Guarantee (of) right to work as a fundamental right, release accumulated food stocks to start food-to-work programmes to generate employment.

* Allocation on education to be increased to at least 10 per cent of national Budget and 30 per cent of State Budgets, free and compulsory education for all up to the age of 14, syllabus and curriculum to strengthen scientific temper, secularism, national unity and integrity.

* Implementation of land reforms by plugging loopholes in the law and distribution of land, reversal of laws brought in due to new economic policies diluting land reform provisions, security of tenure for tenants.

* Reservation to be extended to Christians from Converted Scheduled Castes.

* Registration of marriage to be made compulsory, one-third of the seats in legislatures and Parliament be reserved for women.

* Immediate legislation separating religion from politics.

* Transfer of all cases connected with Ayodhya dispute to the Supreme Court under Article 138(2), strict implementation of status quo of religious places as of August 15,1947.

* Immediate legislation for comprehensive electoral reforms to eliminate money and muscle power from elections on the basis of the Dinesh Goswami Committee report, amend section 77 of the RPA to plug loopholes in enforcing ceiling on election expenditure of candidates.

Iran

Iran: President Rafsanjani Calls For Exploitation of Gas

LD2503132896 Tehran IRNA in English 1042 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bandar Abbas, Hormuzgan Prov., Mar 25 (IRNA) — President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani here Monday [25 March] referring to the rich gas reserves in southern Iran said that efforts should concentrate on exploitation of undersea gas reserves.

Making the remark during the inaugural ceremony of the 'Sarkhoun 2' gas refinery, the president added that connecting the gas pipeline of northern Iran to southern and southeastern Iran will create a compelete gas supply network in the country.

President Rafsanjani, who arrived in this southern province Sunday, stressed that linking the network to the eastern regions, especially to Sistan-Baluchestan Province, will expand the country's gas industry.

The president regarded the 500 billion cubic meters of gas reserves in Hormuzgan Region as a point of strength for the gas industry of Iran and said that these reserves can be utilized for many many years.

Some $4,000 million worth of fuel has been saved due to providing gas for home use, he said expressing hope that the amount will reach $4,500 million during the current Iranian year which started March 20.

The president termed the industrial growth and development in Qeshm Region as positive saying that 400 industrial units are being constructed in the region, 100 of which are to become operational soon.

President Rafsanjani expressed hope that the island will be turned into a huge industrial center in the country by the end of the Second Five-Year Development Plan (1995-1999).

Meanwhile, the president awarded the managing director of the National Iranian Gas Company, Hamdollah Mohammad Nejad, with a medal in appreciation of his services.

Iran: Rafsanjani Inaugurates Iron-Ore Mining, Piped Gas Projects

LD2503195396 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani this afternoon inaugurated the project to expand the Gol-e Gowhar iron-ore mining complex near Sirjan. The project is implemented to reduce the steel industries' dependence on imported iron-ore concentrate.

The project, after completion, will produce 5 million tonnes of concentrate per year, saving the country about $100 million in foreign currency. It will also create more than 2,000 new jobs in the complex. [passage omitted]

During the inauguration ceremony, the mines and metals minister presented a report saying: In the month of Esfand [20 February to 19 March 1996] 480,000 tonnes of steel was produced in the country. And this year [which began on 20 March 96], the Mubarakeh steel mill capacity will increase to 7 million tonnes.

He added: the privatization process in the Mines and Metals Ministry will continue until we reach the international standards.

After the opening ceremony the president and his entourage inspected various departments of the mining complex.

This evening our country's president lit the gas torch in Sirjan, and simultaneously a gas torch was lit in Rafsanjan to celebrate the linking of these two cities to the country's piped gas network. At the same time work began to link Kerman to the country's gas network.

The project to supply piped gas to Sirjan, Rafsanjan, the Sarcheshmeh copper complex and Pariz was implemented by laying 416 km of main gas pipeline from the Sarkhun refinery in Bandar Abbas. Thanks to this project, about 100,000 families as well as the power station and units of the Sarcheshmeh copper complex will enjoy the comfort of piped natural gas. [passage omitted]

Iran: President Visits Sirjan Free-Trade Zone

LD2503195696 Tehran IRNA in English 1930 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sirjan, Kerman Prov. March, 25, IRNA — President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani inspected different parts of Sirjan free trade zone in Kerman Province on Monday [25 March].

During the president's inspection on development projects in the province, the managing director of the Sirjan free trade zone, Shah Bakhsh, presented an account of the activities in the zone.

He said that the giant manufacturing, trade and service complex of Sirjan, on the verge of going into streamline, has been established merely through private investments.

Shah Bakhsh added that so far over 57,000 tons of goods have been accepted in the region's customs department, of which 22,000 tons have been cleared.

He noted that the remaining 35,000 tons are preserved in the region's private and public warehouses without time and customs restrictions.

According to Shah Bakhsh, in the industrial section, 220,000 hectars of lands have so far been handed over to applicants, noting that Sirjan special economic zone lies on an area of 370 hectars and that its activity has begun since 1994.

Located some 180 kilometers from the center of Kerman Province, Sirjan is situated between the centers of the provinces of Hormozgan, Yazd, and Shiraz.

Iran: President Rafsanjani Continues Kerman Visit

LD2603094296 Tehran IRNA in English 0708 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bam, Kerman Province, March 26, IRNA — President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani in continuation of his inspection tour of the southeastern province of Kerman arrived here Monday night [25 March].

The president, upon his arrival here, in a session with those in charge of building the city's new 'ark', emphasized preservation of historical and geographical features of the region. The city's new ark is being built next to the ancient premises.

The president said that protecting historical heritage of the region requires realization of cultural, industrial, agricultural and tourism features and potential of the area.

Referring to the tourist attractions of Bam region, the president said that expansion and development of the region's transportation network and construction of new airport and railway track will definitely be helpful in this regard.

President Rafsanjani added that establishment of auto industry in Bam will drastically boost development in the region. He said that the people and the officials are full of praises for the projects launched and completed in this desert region.

He further said that his administration supports the ark comprehensive plan, which once completed, will be a source of pride for the country.

Iran: Paper Says Country 'Bought Time' for Germany

NC2503215696 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 17 Mar 96 p 2

[Commentary by Yunes Shokrkhah: "From the Rhine to Karkheh—From Imagination to Reality"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] On the international level, Germany's stand on the world movement of Islam has become the pivot of that country's maneuvers vis-a-vis America. Germany has a two-sided stand on this: Inside Germany, it resorts to a strict control on any type of Islamic tendency, and on the international level, it speaks about a constructive relationship with the world of Islam. It is not clear how uniform this stand is at the level of the German rule. The Germans have made their Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel into Germany's window to the world, and they speak about this topic only from Kinkel's mouth. And in addition to the economic aspects of the issue, Germany's closeness to Iran can be studied from this angle.

On both these levels, and despite their postulations of a complicated stand, the Germans are operating from inside a glass house.

When it comes to the issue of Germany's closeness to Iran, it should be noted that Iran—as the "homeland" of the Islamic Revolution movement—has set aside a heavy claim against Germany—a claim that can extend from Karkheh to the Rhine. Germany, either willingly or unwillingly, is a partner in Iraq's chemical crimes against the children of this country. By pointing at the possibility of a rectification of stands by Germany, and especially in view of Germany's role in the European Union, Iran separated Germany's position from America's so that Germany would not be accountable for American influences. Germany is well aware that if the world of Islam considers Bonn to be separate from London and Washington and does not include it on the list of the current anti-Islamic countries in the West, it is mainly because of good will from Iran. With its great broadmindedness, the Islamic Republic of Iran not only did not direct the potentials [preceding word in English] of the world of Islam against Bonn, but it also "bought time" for that country. And it is improbable that the Germans are unaware of the dangerous consequences of alienating this potential and think that resorting to this will be to their benefit. [passage omitted]

The Germans have tried to balance their stands vis-a-vis Washington and Tel Aviv, at a time when most countries of the world have reduced their foreign ministry activities dealing with these two countries to a minimum because of the political paralysis that both are facing.

Iran: Paper Calls On Government To Adopt Stand Against Germany

NC2603102796 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 18 Mar 96 pp 1, 14

[Editorial: "The Germans in the Clutches of Zionism"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Germans are in the clutches of the Zionists, and it seems they have lost their independence of views and actions.

Almost in parallel with the failure of the joint American-Zionist efforts in the Sharm al-Shaykh conference, the German prosecutor general issued an arrest warrant for Mr. Fallahian-Khuzestani, information minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on the trumped-up charges of involvement in the assassination of four people in Berlin. A spokesman for the German prosecutor general, Ralf Henisch [name as published], said that this decision was not influenced by the Bonn government. He even claimed this had nothing to do with the Sharm al—Shaykh antiterrorism conference. However, he did not explain what behind-the—scenes role the Zionists played in this.

Bonn government officials have whispered in the ears of the Iranian officials that they did all they could to prevent the surprising decisions by the German judiciary system, and that they could not do anything more. If this allegation is correct, it is an extremely bitter pill for the German people and officials, and regrettable, that they cannot resist outside pressures. Also regrettable is the fact that the Americans and the Zionists have easily been able to affect Germany's foreign relations with other countries.

The American newspaper THE NEW YORK TIMES very happily welcomed this step by the Germans and stated that "the German magistrate has taken an extremely unusual step and one that can strengthen America's efforts to isolate Iran." Thus, it now seems the German officials have become a tool in the hands of the Zionists and have been unable to contain the pressure by Zionist circles on Germany's decisionmaking centers.

Legal principles say each country's judicial system should be independent, and that it should also be immune from influence by statesmen. But the disgusting way things have changed in Germany is surprising. The German judicial system has become a tool in the hands of foreigners, allowing the Zionists to ridicule the Germans' independence of vote and action as regards their judicial system.

The German prosecutor general did not delay a bit in publishing the arrest warrant against the Iranian information minister. As a result of their defeat at the Sharm al-Shaykh conference, the Zionists pressured him to issue this warrant.

Thus, the Zionists have found an opportunity to take control of the decisionmaking instruments in Germany, trampling underfoot Germany's national interests and harming Bonn's relations with other countries. All these things are extremely surprising, since they all have to do with Islamic Iran and the interests of the Iranian nation. Therefore, it is no longer in our interest to strive to expand and consolidate our economic relations with Germany and create conditions under which the Zionists will possibly be able to inflict a blow on the Iranian Government and nation.

This is a big test for Iranian-German relations, proving that the 3 billion German mark volume of economic relations between Iran and Germany cannot guarantee continuing bilateral relations, that this considerable figure is what has made these relations so vulnerable, and that it has created conditions under which America and the Zionists are constantly being enticed to inflict more effective blows on these relations.

Of course the German Government and people are facing a complicated situation. This phenomenon shows that they are still unable to taste the sweetness of "independence". The German people have not yet forgotten how Berlin was besieged and occupied by foreign armies. Even though the German masses may not be very well aware of it, German statesmen, at least, know that because of World War II and under American pressure they have thus far been forced to pay tens of billions of marks as "war compensation" to the Zionists.

If Germany is independent, it should show that independence in its actions and prove that a few racist Zionists cannot affect as they please things Germany holds sacred and Germany's relations with other countries.

One wonders why the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to show such obsequiousness toward the Germans, and turn a blind eye to the things they do. Why should light not be thrown on the criminal, inhuman role of the Germans in arming Saddam [Husayn] with chemical weapons? Why should the record of Saddam's war crimes, in which the Germans played the "leading role," be cast into oblivion? Who benefits from the silence regarding the overt role of the Germans in Saddam's war crimes?

It is not in our interest to remain silent about all these things and to allow the Germans to seize the initiative and "build a case" against the officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Such things are blatant insults to the Iranian Government and nation. This is tantamount to casting aspersion on the respect and dignity of the Iranian nation; it was precisely in order to denigrate the entire nation that this sentence was issued. Why should we remain silent, when the Germans do not respect our minister, our government, and our nation and are trying to denigrate us? When they insist on maintaining their mistaken positions, why should we not stand up for our correct positions?

The maimed victims of chemical warfare have many things to say, things that should be carefully considered. The record of the crimes in Halabjah and the Germans' direct role in arming Saddam with chemical weapons should be examined in competent Iranian and world courts, and the culprits — at the head of which are the Germans — should be legally prosecuted. It should be this nation, our judiciary, and the victims of the crimes perpetrated jointly by the Germans and Saddam that should take the Germans to court and prosecute them for their crimes. Only in this way can the racist Zionists be prevented from inflicting blows on Iranian officials and from building up cases to denigrate our nation. Germany is a hostage in the clutches of Zionism. It is up to us to look out for ourselves.

Iran: Tehran Radio Reviews Year of 'Problems' for U.S. Policy

NC2303131996 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 23 Mar 96

[Commentary by News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] The [Iranian] year that just ended was fraught with numerous vicissitudes and events relating to U.S. foreign and domestic policy. Washington encountered difficulties and failures, as well as progress in its foreign policy aims to maintain its position in the international community.

U.S. foreign policy encountered a plethora of problems in 1374 [Iranian year beginning 21 March 1995]: promoting the Dayton accord to resolve the Balkan crisis, instability in the Arab-Israeli compromise, Russian opposition to NATO expansion and the membership of East and Central Europen countries in NATO, failure in its efforts to impose anti-Iranian and anti-Cuban policies on its allies, the trade war with the PRC and Japan, and with the White House's tension-generating policy on PRC-Taiwan relations.

On the domestic front, the United States experienced various incidents and problems, each of which can be considered singularly unprecedented. These were: the explosion in the federal center in Oklahoma, which resulted in the killing and injuring of more than 400 people; the protest march by 1 million black men in Washington; and the months-long impasse between the White House and the Congress on the budget bill. These three phenomena revealed in various ways the social, economic, and political fissures within the United States.

These events created ideological conflicts that according to many analysts are unprecedented since the American Civil. The 19 April 1995 Oklahoma explosion is one of the most remarkable occurrences of the past half-century, an event rooted in U.S. social developments. This attack on a U.S. federal police [FBI] office occurred exactly two years after the massacre of more than 80 members and supporters of [Branch Davidian] leader David Koresh and generated immense controversy. It revealed the existence and nature of a group known as the Michigan Militia and numerous similar extreme-right groups opposed to the federal government. This event also raised questions relating to strident claims that blind terrorism originates outside the United States, and particularly in the Middle East.

There are various theories about the roots of terrorism, but in fact, it may be stated that terrorism is a phenomenon that surfaces in reaction to the implementation of vindictive measures with the ruling party ignoring the wishes of groups that consider themselves representatives of the people. It stems from the hardships that such groups have to endure.

An example of this is the suppression and massacre of the David Koresh cult at its base in Waco, which was followed by the Oklahoma bombing and the explosion on a passenger train in Arizona last year. One of the objectives of the march by the blacks in the month of Mehr [23 September-22 October] was to protest the racist behavior of the police and the U.S. judicial system toward blacks, especially during the Los Angeles protests. This march was the largest such gathering the United States has ever seen. The participation of more than 1 million men in this march is an indicator of the pitiful conditions that they endure, as well as of their opposition to discrimination, violence, and crime, conditions directly attributable to the government's discriminatory policies and the moral decadence that prevails in American society.

The thing about that million-man march that drew the most attention at the time was the pivotal, basic role of Islam. Many of the Blacks chanted Islamic slogans such as "God is Great" and "There is no god but Allah," thus highlighting the role of Islam as the only salve for healing their historic wounds. This ever-increasing inclination toward Islam in the United States has transformed Islam into the most rapidly growing religion. It is predicted that Islam will become the second most widespread religion, after Christianity, by the year 2000.

Iran: U.S. Attempts To Block Chinese Nuclear Cooperation Viewed

LD2503144996 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The U.S. daily THE WASHINGTON POST wrote on Sunday 24 March that China has rejected the U.S. demand to stop nuclear cooperation with Iran. According to that paper, Robert Einhorn, one of the U.S. under-secretaries of state, had informed Chinese officials of his government's demand during his recent trip to Beijing.

In concert with the Zionist regime, the U.S. officials previously claimed that Iran was trying to build weapons of mass destruction on numerous occasions and demanded that Beijing stop its nuclear energy cooperation with the Islamic Republic. The U.S. regime also tried very hard to stop peaceful nuclear cooperation between Iran and Russia.

Those efforts, however, ended in defeat practically. Nevertheless, in line with its big brother policies, the U.S. Government is now concentrating its efforts on convincing Beijing to refrain from nuclear technology cooperation with Iran.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has based its policy of peaceful nuclear energy cooperation with countries such as China and Russia on a correct and internationally accepted basis and in accordance with IAEA regulations. According to political analysts, as members of that agency, Iran and China are allowed to have peaceful nuclear energy cooperation and no country can prevent them from doing so. What is certain, however, is that the United States and the Zionist regime are trying to suspend Iran's peaceful nuclear cooperation agreements with Russia and China through their propaganda campaign. But Beijing and Moscow have adopted an independent policy in this regard and rejected illegitimate demands by Washington on this issue.

At the same time, Russia and China well know that the Zionist regime, which has violated all international laws and regulations and now possesses over 200 nuclear warheads, is behind all this black propaganda against Iran. This is why informed political sources believe that China's recent action in rejecting the U.S. demand to end its nuclear cooperation with Iran is an indication of the fact that Beijing would not allow the growing Sino-Iranian relations to be marred by Washington's propaganda campaign and pressure tactics.

Iran: Commentary Examines Iraqi Elections

LD2503143296 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1000 GMT 25 Mar 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] News agencies report that parliamentary elections were held in Iraq yesterday and that the Iraqi people went to the polls to elect 220 parliamentary deputies. [passage omitted]

Although the Iraqi Ba'th Party was trying hard to portray a suitable image in yesterday's elections, Iraqi opposition groups said that the elections were a show and that voting would only strengthen the foundations of the ruling regime in Baghdad. Baghdad also claimed that the Iraqi people participated in the elections but news agencies said people were cool in approaching the elections.

Political experts believe that the holding of the [recent presidential] referendum and the [parliamentary] elections were efforts to portray a democratic image for Saddam Husayn's government and that Iraq's isolation following the oil war and the subsequent extensive propaganda against Baghdad has forced Iraq's Ba'th government to try to change its image. Iraqi officials think such action will allow them to create the possibility of an end to international sanctions, an end to the country's isolation, and a gradual return to regional and international activity. However, this has been prevented, despite the above efforts, because of conflicting actions by the Iraqi Government. For instance, the fugitive son-in-law of Saddam Husayn was killed three days after returning to Baghdad despite the fact that he had received a pardon. Political observers say this case was an example of how violence is being used in the country.

Iran: Article Examines Jordan's Cultural Problems With Israel

LD2503192596 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ELSAMI in Persian 16 Mar 96 p 2

[Article by Seyyed Mohammad Ali Abtahi: "A Look Abroad: Jordan and Its Cultural Problems With Israel"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jordan is a country which has an established cultural mold. [passage omitted]

Jordanian intellectuals and cultural figures have shone well in the Arab world, particularly in the fight against the Zionist enemy. [passage omitted]

Egypt, nearly 20 years after the Camp David Accord, has not yet been able to normalize its social, cultural, and artistic relations with Israel. The Jordanian Government has made a great effort to somehow solve that problem and normalize its cultural and artistic relations with Israel — a problem that is not easy because of the intellectual maturity of Arab artists and intellectuals. In the short time since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Jordan and Israel, their cultural ties have not progressed well. Popular pressure to negate cultural ties on the one hand, and government pressure to solve this problem on the other, resulted in the Jordanian foreign minister signing the cultural agreement with Israel instead of the former Jordanian information minister, who should have signed it, (the Israeli information minister [as published] has signed on Israel's behalf), and the [Jordanian] information minister being changed in the new government. [passage omitted]

However, the problem of normalizing cultural ties apparently goes beyond the signing of agreements and the issuing of orders by political leaders. In economic and political issues, America's support and the power of the domestic police force may be able to open doors, but issues relating to the inner self and human beings, such as culture and arts, cannot be made to order. For if the possibility of normalizing relations with the Zionist regime was an easy issue in the Arab public opinion, the leaders of many American puppet regimes would have broken the ice by now. The history of Zionist aggression and injustices has had such an effect on the lives and thoughts of Muslims and Arabs that it would take a long time to forget — a reality that Egypt, as the first government to establish ties with Israel, has not realized. One day the foreign minister of that country, who was one day regarded as a symbol of establishing ties with Israel and a traitor to Islamic ideals, said to the king of Jordan: Now that you have made peace with Israel, why do you move at a slow pace!

Iran: Commentary Views Relations Within Gulf Cooperation Council

LD2503152196 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 25 Mar 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Although there has not yet been a report of the content of the message from Qatari Amir Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani to the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia Emir Abdullah, delivered on Sunday 24 March, there is conjecture that it will focus on the expansion of bilateral ties.

Relations between Qatar and Saudi Arabia deteriorated during the 16th Persian Gulf Cooperation Council Summit held last December. The cause of the difference was that Qatar believed that the new secretary general of the council must be elected from Qatar. The Saudi Arabians, however, managed to maintain their grip on the secretary general position through their influence.

Meanwhile, the diffusion of a subversive attempt in Qatar on 17 February which, according to Qatari officials, the former amir and some foreign countries were behind, further soured Doha relations with Riyadh and Manama. However, the meeting of the foreign ministers from the six council member countries, held on Sunday 17 March, in which Doha conceded to the appointment of Jamil Hujaylan [as heard] as the new secretary general seems to have been fabricated to ease tensions between Qatar and the council members.

This withdrawal by Doha comes at a time when Oman's proposal for the new secretary general of the council was ratified on an alphabetic basis. Therefore, the visit of Hujaylan, as the new secretary general of the council, to Qatar, which began Sunday 24 March, can be seen as Doha's approval of him. The Qatari officials, however, did not give him a red carpet welcome.

On the other hand, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, the two neighboring allies in the council, share wider rifts in relations mending them will require more efforts. The two countries have border disputes which, in 1992, led to a military clash between them. In the council, Qatar is not so content with the role of Saudi Arabia as big brother. In a border dispute between Qatar and Bahrain, Saudi Arabia mostly backs Bahrain. Accordingly, in the view of most observers watching the recent conciliation between Doha and other members of the council, particularly Riyadh, they do not take it so seriously. The observers believe that the move to improve relations is more a show of unity within the council. Qatar, however, needs peace and good neighborly relations for progress in its huge exploitation and gas transfer projects.

Iran: Foreign Ministry Spokesman Rejects Terrorism Charges

LD2603103896 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Our country's Foreign Ministry spokesman has described the joint commotion by the United States and the Zionist regime against the Islamic Republic of Iran as psychological warfare. He said: The U.S. support for the criminal Zionist regime, which survives on the basis of kidnapping and assassination — and such inhuman activities it admits — and which murders the defenseless people of Lebanon, can have no other meaning but support for terrorism. And such policies are despised and opposed by Muslims.

Mr. [Mahmud] Mohammadi described the Zionist regime as the focal point of state terrorism and added: As the leader of an illegitimate regime, [Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on] Peres cannot hide their black record of terrorist activities and crimes against Palestinian women and children, because the survival of this usurper regime has been based on annihilating the just rights of Palestinian Muslims.

Regarding [former British Prime Minister] Thatcher's remarks about efforts by Iran to obtain weapons of mass destruction, he described her as politically bankrupt and said: The Islamic Republic of Iran has proposed a new program for a comprehensive nuclear test ban, and this was welcomed by many countries in the world, including Britain, at the disarmament conference in Geneva.

Mr. Mohammadi added: As the most recent victim of chemical weapons in the current century, the Islamic Republic of Iran performed a valuable service for humanity by encouraging governments to move toward a more serious international commitment to banning and limiting the use of chemical weapons and has itself signed this agreement.

The spokesman added: The Islamic Republic of Iran supports any measure aimed at removing weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East.

Iran: French Firm Advances Sirri Oil Project

LD2503180796 Tehran IRNA in English 1128 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] London, Mar. 25, IRNA — Total Oil of France is pressing ahead with its plans to develop Iran's offshore Sirri E and A oilfields by tendering the main construction contract worth over dlrs [dollars] 300 million.

The French firm has already awarded a contract for delineation drilling to Monument Oil of Ireland and has set a deadline of April 9 for bids for the main offshore construction.

Total is currently leading foreign investment in the Iranian oil sector, having signed a dlrs 600 million deal to develop Sirri E and A last summer in the first 'buy-back' project offered to foreign participation.

Plans to advance the contract come despite U.S. threats to punish non-American companies investing more than dlrs 40 million in Iran's oil and gas sector, but according to PETROLEUM ARGUS weekly, the Total project is unlikely to be affected.

U.S. Congressmen were reported last month to have attempted to blackmail foreign firms against signing any oil deal with Iran by threatening retroactive measures in new legislation.

Washington's escalation of its economic warfare against Iran has already dragged other countries into a war of words with the United States led by European countries protesting against Washington trying to use its extraterritorial reach illegally.

PETROLEUM ARGUS understood that the national Iranian oil company was nevertheless pressing ahead with 11 other buy-back schemes, including the tendering of the Balal and Soroush offshore fields last week.

It said that despite the proposed U.S. sanctions, some foreign firms still intended to bid for the fields whilst conceding they could face problems raising finance.

Iran: Paper Hails Inauguration of Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan Railway

LD2503191496 Tehran IRNA in English 1810 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan, March 25, IRNA — Yerevan-based daily 'RESPUBLIKA ARMENIYA' wrote in its latest issue that imminent inauguration of

Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railway would turn Iran into main coordinator of vast regional commercial ties.

It wrote that outcome of Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali-Akbar Velayati's recent visit to the capitals of the former Soviet republics indicated that they (the republics) were interested in expanding and deepening friendly ties with Iran and considered the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan track as the main road linking Persian Gulf to Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Referring to the U.S. call for imposition of all-out sanctions against Iran, RESPUBLIKA ARMENIYA underlined that regional governments have rejected the Washington's call and have responded positively to Iran's convergence policy towards its northern neighbors.

It added that Iran's recent initiatives in the region have been welcomed by Russia and that the two countries were dealing with strategic policies through considerable developments in bilateral ties.

Iran: Tehran Not To Import Meat From Britain

LD2603104596 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Following the outbreak of mad cow disease in Britain, our country's Meat Organization announced today that Iran does not import meat from Britain. The official said that Iran currently imports meat only from France, Holland, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, and India.

Iran: Former Official Addresses Appeal to Populace

LD2203210596 Tehran SOBH in Persian 12 Mar 96 p 3

[From the "Brief and Exclusive" column: "Amir-Entezam: Stand, Remain Silent, and Look Around You Every Day at Twelve O'Clock Sharp!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Abbas Amir-Entezam, deputy prime minister in the provisional government [following the 1979 revolution], in a statement addressed to "compatriots" and written in the name of the Iran National Salvation Movement, has asked Iranians wherever they are inside the country, to stand up, remain silent and look around themselves, every day, at twelve o'clock exactly. Elsewhere in this statement, Amir-Entezam — who was recently released from Evin prison after spending time there on charges of espionage — has added: You should not expect many people to join you in the first few days. But, you can be sure that in no time at all you will turn into a huge crowd!

Iran: KHORASAN on Liberals' 'Ploy' in Majles Elections

NC2403155396 Mashhad KHORASAN in Persian 17 Mar 96 pp 1, 11

[Political commentary: "Much Ado About Nothing—In the Margin of the Withdrawal of the Liberals From the Majles Elections"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Months before the fifth term elections, liberalist, intellectual processes, and the supporters of the heterodox process, as well as members of the Freedom Movement of Iran, portrayed in the propaganda of their affiliated press that the elections were only a contrived show and that only one process would be eligible to participate and compete in the campaigns.

In order to prove their point, they referred to a thousand and one reasons to portray that those who belonged to the process of the heterodox would not be included in the elections.

Since the very outset, it was obvious that this process had resorted to a new ploy in order to harm the healthiness of the elections and to portray them as undemocratic.

Interviews by the heads of these processes with foreign news agencies, as well as the publication of these interviews in the form of letters and statements in their own publications, all intensified these suspicions.

But, the truth is that the system of the Islamic Republic is so broadminded as to be able to absorb even its own opponents and to make their participation in legislature possible through a democratic process.

The call by the prominent member of the Tehran Militant Clergy, Ayatollah Mahdavi-Kani, to all the people and even of the "heterodox" to register and participate in the elections proved that everyone could participate in this significant event.

The repeated calls by Ayatollah Jannati, one of the experts in the Council of Guardians, as well as by Majles Speaker Nateq-Nuri on all the various groups to participate in the elections showed yet another aspect of the system's readiness to absorb those members of these groups who did not have a very bad record of performance. And even the BBC reported and commented on the remarks by the esteemed leader of the revolution who encouraged combatant, revolutionary, and Muslim intellectuals to participate in the elections.

The initial approval of the eligibility of four members affiliated with the Freedom Movement and, ultimately, the approval by the Council of Guardians of these four candidates, opened up the way for this group's participation in the elections. But, as we said above, the main objective of this group was not to participate in the elections. Their objective was to gain a pretext for even more evil propaganda in order to allege that their eligibility had been rejected and that a monopolistic attitude prevailed.

Although the approval of the eligibility of four members of this process sparked great protest among the hezbollah forces, which support the system, it disarmed this group and neutralized their ploy.

This is because with its withdrawal from the elections, the coalition of the so-called liberal forces under the label of "The Freedom Movement of Iran" (!) actually proved their ill intentions and made a public fool of themselves.

Some political observers believe that the adoption of such a method by the liberals was so that, if they failed in the elections, they would have a pretext to complain and resort to their evil propaganda, and also in order to try to hide the fact that they lack popular support, since if they were confident that they would win, they would have preferred to gain four seats rather than "nothing".

Now that the first round of elections has been completed, we are better able to realize that all the hue and cry by the said process was merely a commotion over "nothing."

Iran: Tehran's Regional Efforts During Past Year Viewed

NC2503164896 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 25 Mar 96

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] In 1370 [1991], when the Soviet Union disintegrated and only a brief period after the disintegration of the empire of the East Bloc, not many people believed that the communists would once again return to power in eastern European countries and in the former Soviet Union. This became ordinary in these countries in 1995 and many communist parties and personalities — from the former Yugoslavia to the Baltic countries, and from Poland to Ukraine and Russia — have gained the relative or absolute majority of votes in parliamentary or presidential elections and once again have become determining political forces.

The victory of the Russian communists in the parliamentary elections in Azar 1374 [November 1995] gave rise to many questions and doubts in the minds of political analysts, especially in the West, on the future of political-economic reforms. This prompted the West to carry out more extensive efforts for the expansion of NATO's realms beyond Russia's borders as quickly as possible; but Yeltsin — under pressure from the communists coming to power — who replaced Andrey Kozyrev by Primakov in the foreign ministry and removed several pro-Western elements from his cabinet, resorted to a new political maneuver vis-a-vis the West's efforts to extend NATO's reach in eastern Europe, and stated that these efforts [by the West] may spark a strong reaction from Moscow.

Moreover, in the former Soviet republics, now known as the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS], acute crises, war and bloodshed have continued in full force in 1374 [year ending 20 March 1996]. A clear example of this is in the tensions in the independence-seeking Republic of Chechnya, which, despite general elections and the formation of Moscow's puppet government, led to a bitter incident of hostage-taking.

In the Caucasus — that is, in Karabakh — the unsolved ethnic dispute over this area continues despite peace conferences. Also, in Tajikistan, the civil war is still going on.

Although the Islamic Republic's uninterrupted efforts next to the other major regional countries led to the establishment of a relative ceasefire and reduced destruction, one of the most important characteristics of 1374 is directly related to the Islamic Republic's ties with Central Asia countries, Russia, and the Caucasus. This is because, during the past [Iranian] year [ending 20 March 1996], the Islamic Republic of Iran began a major foreign policy effort, both within the framework of bilateral relations and regional cooperation in ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] and the Organization of the Caspian Sea Littoral Countries. The valuable results of this policy effort are gradually emerging.

Among these efforts was the signing of a 10-year agreement on strategic cooperation between Iran and Russia and the commencement of practical cooperation in the transfer of advanced technology, fruitful economic relations, cooperation with Central Asian countries in the form of propounding the initiative of tripartite commercial payments, and the convening of cultural congresses and gatherings for acquaintance with common Islamic-Iranian heritage.

Also, efforts to complete railways and roads to the railroad linking Central Asia to Europe and to the Persian Gulf, the beginning of the construction of oil and gas pipelines to transfer regional resources to far-reaching markets in Europe and the Mediterranean [despite] the dangerous influential regional rivalry by foreign powers and especially the Zionist regime in the region, and finally, the successful continuation of Iran's peace-building and stability-creating policy in Central Asia — especially in Tajikistan and Karabakh — are among the characteristics which make 1374 stand out as one of the most fruitful eras of the Islamic Republic's regional diplomacy.

Iran: Official Notes Concerted Efforts Made on Water Projects

LD2303104796 Tehran IRNA in English 0907 GMT 23 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kermanshah, March 23, IRNA — During the past Iranian year which ended on March 20 1996, over Rls. 116 billion have been spent on water related projects, for both drinking and irrigation, in five western provinces, said the managing director of the water department for the western region.

The official, Seyyed Asghar Tehrani, speaking on the occasion of the 'World Water Day', said that the figure clearly indicates the government's interest in developing the country's water resources.

The regional water department is engaged in the implementation of water projects in the western provinces of Kermanshah, Kordestan, Hamedan, Lurestan and Ilam.

According to the official, apart from the said amount, some Rls. 20 billion has also been drawn up from the provincial budget. The amount has been spent on the implementation of 23 projects which includes, the construction of a number of dams and the setting up irrigational channels and aqueduct networks in order to supply water to the big cities in the western region, said Tehrani.

The official concluded by saying that the major objective of the plan is to control over two billion cubic meters of the surface waters in the western region in order to provide irrigational waters for more than 200,000 hectares of farmland and potable water supply for 27 big cities in the western Iran.

Iran: SOBH Newspaper Celebrates First Anniversary

LD2303194996 Tehran SOBH in Persian 12 Mar 96 p 1

[Editorial by Managing Director Mehdi Nasiri: "One Year With You"]

[FBIS Translated Text] SOBH [Morning] is one year old. Before we planted the sapling that was SOBH, we could not believe that we would be able to overcome the difficulties ahead, or that we would attract a large and valued readership in the space of one year. But divine assistance and the very many prayers of our well-wishers and earnest sympathizers upheld the continuation of our work to this day.

SOBH came so that:

— It could guard the reality and values of the revolution with its pivotal, lofty principle of "velayat-e faqih [guardianship of the supreme jurisprudent]".

— Dig a trench in the face of the enemy's cultural onslaught.

— Fight against the obvious wrongs of the contemporary world and against cultural and intellectual eclecticism.

— To have a share in meeting the political, intellectual, and cultural needs of the younger generation.

— To warn against the dangers of revisionism and reaction.

— To expose plunderers of the public treasury and usurpers of people's rights, and...

It may be asked to what extent SOBH has succeeded in fulfilling these missions? The answer to this question should really come from you. But what we shall say is that we earnestly concentrated on these missions and worked towards achieving them.

As the managing director of SOBH, I am responsible for all the weaknesses and shortcomings of this publication. And if there have been some successes, I consider that we owe these to the following factors:

1. The sincere, exact, and keen readers of the publication.

2. My esteemed colleagues in the culture and executive departments.

3. Writers and analysts connected to the publication.

4. Respected officials in charge of the publications department of the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance, who, within the limits of their jurisdiction, support and assist all the country's publications.

5. Respected colleagues of the KEYHAN establishment, specially the laboring and noble forces of the lithograph and rotative [as published] print units.

6. Workers involved in the newspaper distribution cooperatives and their representatives all over the country. While wishing you, dear reader, a good New Year, I thank God for all the favors and blessings, notably, the great blessings of independence, freedom, and the Islamic Republic, bestowed on us under the shadow of

the exalted "velayat-e faqih." May we be granted success in continuing the right path.

Iran: Article Views Importance of Fifth Majles

96LA0162A Tehran PASDAR-E ESLAM in Persian Dec 95 -Jan 96 pp 4-5

[FBIS Translated Text] **The Importance of the Majles**

The Legislative Branch is the manifestation of the national will, one of the most essential political institutions of any country, and among the most important issues concerning basic rights, the main purpose of which is the "self-motivated power of the society in devising rules and regulations to give direction to social relations and to engage in their formation and their limits and boundaries, and which delineates the rights and duties of individuals and groups in a clear manner."[1]

The implementation of the Legislative Branch in the regime of the Islamic Republic is through the Majles,[2] which is at a spiritual and legal status superior to other branches. Hence, the great architect and the late founder of the Islamic Republic, Imam Khomeyni, regarded the Majles as "the power of the whole nation,"[3] "the center of all laws and powers,"[4] "possessing the right to oversee all affairs,"[5] "the highest authority of the country, the result of the blood of those loyal to Islam, the essence of the hard work of the Muslim nation and the shouts of God is great,"[6] and "at the head of all affairs."[7]

From the perspective of the grand leader as well, the Majles is "a lofty place for the reflection of the views and the will of the nation,"[8] "the rule of the regime,"[9] and "the provider of the interests of Islam and the country."[10]

The Constitution of the Islamic Republic, too, has conferred very important authority and duties on the Majles and its deputies. This includes devising laws and general supervision, the right of inquiry and investigation regarding all the affairs of the country, ratification of international contracts and agreements, the right to express opinions on all domestic and foreign issues of the country, and the right to interpellate and question the ministers and vote on the political incompetence of the president.

Considering the aforementioned duties, the grave mission of the Majles and also the depth of this statement by the imam can be clearly understood: "It is the Majles that can steer the foundation of the country to reform or drag its foundation to corruption,"[11] in other words, "a good Majles makes everything good and a bad Majles makes everything bad."[12]

The Sensitive Nature of the Fifth Majles

The climate of the formation of the Fifth Majles is, from foreign and domestic perspectives, more sensitive and determining than all the previous terms. From the foreign perspective, the NATO military expedition in the Persian Gulf under the pretext of the oil war still continues and the enemy has taken a stronghold practically in our neighborhood. The United States and the Zionist regime more than ever before are thinking about influence in the Central Asian countries. We witnessed a recent example of it in the prevention of oil cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Azerbaijan. The neighboring countries of Iran are also faced with crisis and unrest. Afghanistan is burning in the war between political parties; Pakistan is facing ethnic riots; Iraq is suffering from division in the north, domestic unrest, and a destructive economic embargo; Azerbaijan is the scene of a power struggle between parties, on the one hand, and the elimination of religion by Westernized communists, on the other; and Turkey continues to be a NATO base and suffers from political tensions and war with its domestic Kurds.

The sad events of Palestine and the disgraceful process of compromise is becoming more complex every day and the last Arab stronghold (Syria) is about to be destroyed. At the same time, the flame of the intifadah is burning more brightly than every before. Global imperialism, headed by the United States, has risen more than in the past to fight fundamentalist Islam theoretically and in practice and harms the revolutionary Muslims in any possible manner. These include support for the coup d'etat instigators in Algeria, the endorsement of the suppression of the revolutionary Muslims in Egypt, provoking the Taleban group in Afghanistan, the conspiracy to overthrow the Islamic Republic and efforts to recognize the crimes of the Serbs, and stabilization of the occupied cities.

Domestically, too, 17 years have passed since the revolution. Various policies and methods have been experimented with, but still the model of national development has not been correctly defined. Some regard the correct criterion of the reconstruction plan and national development to be absolute privatization and the rule of the capital, and some regard it as securing social justice on the course of revolutionary values. One group believes in expediting the current process and some in controlling, guiding, and perhaps sifting it. Unfortunately, in this decade cultural invasion, love of luxury, and seeking comfort appear in the extreme, and the Westernized, those who think otherwise, the technocrats, and the capitalists are present on various scenes more than ever before. The most important executive official of the country (the president) will be elected during this term, and his mutual ties and relationship with the Majles will be extremely conclusive. The fate of the reform of the administrative system, financial and economic discipline, judicial security, increasing inflation and high prices, the future of parties and liberties, the situation of privatization and the role of capitalists, participation or lack of participation of Iran in international treaties such as GATT or world tariffs and trade, the level of the presence of non-ideological and Westernized management in the administration of the regime, the future of the revolution and guarding values such as the culture of jihad and martyrdom, simple living, social justice, reducing the class gap, and attention to the deprived and the downtrodden—in one word, the fate of the revolution—are tied to the Fifth Majles. Hence, the elections of this term are more conclusive than those of any other term.

Hence, there is a reason why, after the First Majles, for the second time the so-called "opposition" is thinking about political participation and taking part in the elections, and for some time now, the press has been speaking about the theory of transforming the revolution by these people.

The opinions of Western theorists that the "key to Iran-U.S. relations is in the hands of the intellectuals" or "the more power is placed at the disposal of secular technocrats, the more speed positive tendencies will gain" are undoubtedly to strengthen the domestic front (the Fifth Column).

In any case, since physical influence without providing the social grounds and propaganda is not possible, from now, the propaganda bugles outside the borders are propagating those with Westernized ideas in order to prepare the grounds for the people to welcome them. At the same time, in the domestic podiums and publications, the same goal is pursued. If these people do not succeed, global propaganda and their domestic loudspeakers are also prepared to declare the elections flawed, as usual. Undoubtedly, the Muslim people of Iran have in the past years gained valuable experiences regarding elections, which they will naturally use in choosing their candidates. Hence, we can be certain that the bitter experiences of the past, such as what happened in the First Majles elections, will not be repeated. The enemy, too, is more alert to invest under the present conditions in the likes of the freedom movement that has been tested at various junctures, especially in the early years of the victory, and the records of some of whose members are available in the Spy Nest. For this reason, today, it benefits from the seemingly revolutionary liberals, mostly in the guise of revolutionary fellow citizens—in other words, those who say: We must think wisely; we need the fugitive capitalists and the establishment of relations with the United States for development; we must not be dogmatic in cultural issues; politics is not worthy of the status of the clergy; the economy must be left to those who have capital; the participation of Iran in GATT is a must; global government cannot be ignored, etc.

In the meantime, a number of opportunists also, because they do not have brilliant revolutionary pasts and high seminary and university education, by escalating nationalistic and ethnic issues, are trying to acquire seats as deputies, and usually such individuals take refuge to the wealthy in order to come to the Majles under the auspices of their capital.

Based on what has been stated, there should be no doubt that the Majles is the result of the revolution, and under these circumstances, the infiltration of any alien element in it is a serious threat against this outcome. Hence, now that the past political balance and factional divisions have crumbled, it is necessary for religious and fundamentalist forces, by giving centrality to "religious guardianship" and following the lofty ideas of Imam Khomeyni, while rediscovering each other, to form the "guardianship faction" and present themselves for election by the people. It is no secret that the stepping aside of the ideological and fundamentalist forces is not only incompatible with revolutionary responsibility and in the interest of non-fundamentalist forces, but is contrary to the recommendations of Imam Khomeyni and his political-divine will.

Since sometimes technocrats, capitalists and opportunists appear in the guise of reformers and revolutionaries and truth and falsehood commingle, certain criteria are necessary for choosing which we will discuss in the future issues, God willing. [Signed] Editor in chief

Notes:

1. BASIC RIGHTS AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS, p. 426.
2. Article 58 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran.
3. SAHIFEH-YE NUR, Vol. 12, p. 17.
4. Ibid., p. 117.
5. Ibid., p. 265.
6. Ibid., Vol. 14, p. 293.
7. Ibid., Vol. 17, p. 15.
8. Speech on 27 Azar 1370 [18 December 1991].
9. Ibid.
10. Speech on 24/02/1371 [14 May 1992].
11. SAHIFEH-YE NUR, Vol. 12, p. 272.
12. Ibid., Vol. 18, p. 202.

Iran: Director of GOZARESH Condemned to Prison

96LA0162B London KEYHAN in Persian 4 Jan 96 p 3

[FBIS Translated Text] Abolqasem Golbaf, the manager of GOZARESH monthly (published in Tehran), whose expositions of the corruption and improper actions in government offices and government affiliated establishments are well-known, was summoned to court. The summons of Golbaf to the court took him by surprise, and it was even more surprising since he had just learned about the accusations against him and realized that there were five attorneys present in the court to defend several ministries, particularly the Ministry of Agriculture, while he had no defense attorney at all.

On the other hand, Mehdi Nasiri, the manager of SOBH newspaper, the former editor in chief of KEYHAN (published in Tehran), was present in the court along with a group who continuously shouted, "Abolqasem Golbaf must be condemned."

Affected by such a climate, Abolqasem Golbaf was sentenced to three months in prison, which can be bought, and he immediately appealed this sentence. Mansur Taraji, the former editor in chief of ETTELA'AT, who now resides in Paris and works with GOZARESH, said in a telephone interview to KEYHAN that the issuance of this ruling is contrary to the press law of the Islamic Republic, which states that if a journal has published an item according to which a person or an organization is accused without any grounds, a refutation or an explanation must first be sent to that journal. If the journal refuses to publish it, he can then go to the prosecutor and request the publication of the refutation. Then, if the journal ignores the order of the Prosecutor's Office, a court with a jury will be held to investigate the complaint. In any case, the accused must already be informed of the accusations, whereas in regards to the summoning of Abolqasem Golbaf to the court, none of those procedures were followed. Stating that the director of the court, Sa'idi, made an effort not to have the court be affected by the atmosphere of pressure, Taraji added that, nevertheless, all signs of danger point to the tightening of the pressure on the press. See the article by Abolqasem Golbaf in GOZARESH entitled, "All Roads End in the Black Market," on page 7.

Iran: Sheykh 'Ali Tehrani Condemned to Exile

96LA0162E London KEYHAN in Persian 4 Jan 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] The Special Clergy Court condemned Sheykh 'Ali Tehrani, who returned to Iran a few months ago after 11 years of living in Iraq, to 20 years in exile. According to the head of the Special Clergy Court, the court recognized Sheykh 'Ali Tehrani as belligerent toward God, but changed his sentence to exile because of his advanced age. The place of exile of Sheykh 'Ali Tehrani was not announced.

Iran: Further on Sheykh 'Ali Tehrani's Exile

96LA0162I London KEYHAN in Persian 18 Jan 96 p 12

[FBIS Translated Text] Sheykh 'Ali Tehrani, the husband of the sister of Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, the leader of the Islamic Republic, who was one of his students when he was younger, fled to Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war. Without joining the People's Mojahedin Organization, he established close ties with it. In any case, the program that he broadcast every night on Baghdad radio most enthusiastically had many listeners in Iran, because with his correct knowledge of the Islamic revolution and the government that had been established, he strongly attacked Ruhollah Khomeyni personally and then these around him, including his former student and brother-in-law, 'Ali Khamene'i.

Sheykh 'Ali Tehrani, who was a religious magistrate in Mashhad for a while after the revolution, finally was tired of living in Iraq. He first wanted to live in a European country, but several of his friends and acquaintances made him change his mind. Hence, despite the insults that he had made against Khomeyni and his regime, he left for Iran. His wife had already gone to Iran.

The minister of information of the Islamic Republic, or in any case someone under this title, had appeared on television and said that Sheykh 'Ali Tehrani would be put on trial and sentenced in accordance with religious law. The trial, of course, took place, but there is a question regarding the sentencing of Sheykh 'Ali Tehrani, because, according to informed sources, the 20 years of exile to which he is sentenced is in fact no exile; he is placed in a villa in northern Iran—and for that matter, a confiscated villa—with guards ostensibly placed there to watch him, but in fact they protect him. Biting tongues say that Sheykh 'Ali has a "cozy" circle in northern Iran, near Nowshahr.

Iran: Second Trial Session for GARDUN Director

96LA0162C London KEYHAN in Persian 18 Jan 96 p 3

[FBIS Translated Text] The second court session of 'Abbas Ma'rufi, the manager of GARDUN magazine, was held on Monday, 18 Dey (8 January) in Tehran.

In this session, a person by the name of Firuz Aslani, as a representative of the Tehran Ansar-e Hezbollah headquarters, and Mehdi Nasiri, the former editor-in-chief of the case construction establishment of KEYHAN in Tehran and the present director of SOBH weekly, participated. It is not clear under what title and legal permit these two were present in the court. They accused 'Abbas Ma'rufi of publishing obscene matters, interviewing "counterrevolutionary individuals," and publishing issues that propagate corruption and prostitution. Moreover, Mehdi Nasiri protested the delay in examining the complaint against GARDUN. The next court session was set for Bahman 2 [22 January].

Iran: Uprising Reported in Shiraz' 'Adelabad Prison

96LA0162F London KEYHAN in Persian 18 Jan 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Three prisoners in 'Adelabad Prison of Shiraz took advantage of the disorder created by the rioting of a number of prisoners and escaped, but security officials killed one of them and wounded the other two. The name of the prisoner who was killed is Rahman Aslani. The two wounded prisoners are hospitalized.

The 'Adelabad Prison of Shiraz is one of the worst prisons in Iran, holding political prisoners, smugglers, thieves, and murderers all in one place.

Iran: Skirmishes Reported at Tabriz University

96LA0162G London KEYHAN in Persian 18 Jan 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] The old conflicts between the administration of Tabriz University and the Islamic Society of this university escalated last week, and the members of the Islamic Society, under the pretext that the president of the university had not allowed them to hold open discussion meetings, broke the windows of University Hall, insulted the president of the university, and scuffled with him and his colleagues. The difference of opinion between the members of the Islamic Society of Tabriz University and the officials of that university have increased as in many other universities since last year because in a meeting of university administrators last year it was said that the trouble making and interferences of the Islamic societies of universities impede education, and it was regarded as one of the reasons that professors are reluctant to accept the positions of directorship of the higher education centers. Moreover, most of the members of the Islamic societies are quota students who have entered the universities without the entrance examination. This is also the problem for the colleges of law and the technical colleges of the University of Tehran, the University of Khajeh Nasir, and 'Allameh Tabataba'i University.

Iran: Ministry Says Budget Lacking for Fighting AIDS

96LA0162H London KEYHAN in Persian 18 Jan 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] The deputy minister of health announced last week in an interview with reporters: We do not have even one rial to implement the AIDS prevention program.

Dr. Hoseyn Malek-Afzali said: Those who must place the budget for fighting AIDS at the disposal of the Ministry of Health believe that this is not a priority for the country. Dr. Marandi, the minister of health of the Islamic Republic, said a few days ago that AIDS is invading Asia from Africa. He said: In Iran, 311 patients have AIDS, and so far 100 have died as a result of AIDS.

Iran: Five Hundred University Professors Dismissed

96LA0162L London KEYHAN in Persian 7 Mar 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] Upon the instruction of the Central Organization of the Open University, 500 professors of this university were dismissed.

In explaining the dismissal of these professors, the president of the university has said: "This group has been forced to leave the university because of selection problems."

One of the dismissed professors, who was chosen as an exemplary professor earlier and had worked in that university for more than five years, complained to the Determination Committee of the Ministry of Labor. The committee voted that this professor should continue his position, but the president of the university prevented his admittance. The general director of the faculty of the Open University said regarding the dismissal of these professors: "The competence of these professors was based on regulations that were prepared earlier, but the new regulations negate their selection."

Protesting the manner in which the professors were dismissed, a professor who works at the university told reporters:

"This action ignores the job security of the university faculty, because in the future you may be called to settle accounts at any moment on the basis of new regulations."

In the opinion of observers, the dismissal of this group of professors is related to the skirmishes and unrest in recent months in the university centers in Iran. At the present, the Open University has a faculty of 6,000.

Pakistan

Pakistan: Foreign Minister Leaves for Geneva

BK2503060096 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 25 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The foreign minister, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, has gone to Geneva to attend meetings of the Human Rights Commission and Conference on Disarmament. In his address to the Human Rights Commission, the foreign minister is expected to draw the attention of the world community toward massive human rights violations by Indian troops in occupied Kashmir. In his address to the Conference on Disarmament, he will express Pakistan's principled position on issues of peace and security at the global and regional level.

Pakistan: Kashmir Mosque Siege Linked to Hindu 'Fanaticism'

BK2603065796 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 25 Mar 96

[Commentary by A.B.S. Jafri]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Even in the most avowedly secular culture, places of worship and meditation are given the highest respects and provided strict protection against disturbance or disrespect. India is supposed to be a secular republic. From international platforms, delegates of India proclaim the virtues of secular culture. With these self-righteous professions on the one hand, Indian political leaders bear the axe in the other to pull down Muslim places of worship. During the past some years, mosques in India have been a favorite target of at least half a dozen recognized political parties, groups, and volunteers. India has also the distinction of a regular militant and militarized force which calls itself the Shiv Sena. It is the army of the Hindu deity Shiva. Its major objective is to intimidate and actually inflict violence on the Muslim minority on any contrived excuse.

What makes this increasing tendency in India really scary is that it is infecting the lay citizens and members of the government services. A committed Hindu zealot in the police force or the paramilitary forces becomes a real danger to public peace and members of the Muslim minority in particular. The world knows how the Bombay police went on the rampage when there was a bomb explosion in Bombay Stock Exchange building. Many hundreds of Muslim citizens of India were killed in one day and scores of shops and business establishments of the Muslims were set on fire. The latest of such incidents, frequent as they are, is reported once again from the Indian-occupied Kashmir. Under attack now is the holiest Muslim shrine of the disputed Jammu and Kashmir state. This shrine named Hazratbal is administered by the Muslim community. It is traditionally the center of activity of the Muslims and as such it has been a target of the Indian military authorities. That the mosque is under strict surveillance round the clock is now the established practice. As the entire Indian occupied part of the disputed state is under military control, the Hazratbal mosque is under a virtual military siege. The Kashmiri people not only resent this but the activists refuse to submit to military control of their holiest shrine. The result is that there is a constant tussle between the people and the military occupation troops, frequently erupting into serious trouble provoked by the soldiers. Latest reports speak of grave tension. The Kashmiri freedom fighters claim that the mosque is in their possession and the Indian military authorities assert that the shrine is under their control.

Quite apart from what actually may be the situation at this very moment, the point to notice is that the military authorities insist upon having a place of worship under their control. Places of worship are not supposed to be under the control of gun toting troops. This situation is quite of a [word indistinct] with the general passion in India. Not long ago, a militant mob razed to the ground a 450-year-old mosque in the Uttar Pradesh state of India, while Indian troops stood by watching the unprecedented vandalism. Apart from being a place of Muslim worship, the Ayodhya mosque was also a protected monument under the custody of the Indian Department of Archaeology. It was built during the reign of the famed Mughal dynasty of India's most illustrious imperial rulers.

But then occupied Kashmir mosque have been under attack as a matter of normal routine; the Charar Sharif mosque held in reverence second only to the Hazratbal mosque was set on fire and destroyed totally by the Indian military troops. The excuse was that some activists of the Kashmir freedom movement were allegedly sheltered inside the mosque. The mosque structure was largely made of timber as many buildings in Kashmir are. The fire organized and started by the Indian military personnel reduced the entire mosque to ashes.

It needs to be noted that the mosques are not the only places of worship which are targeted by militant Hindu fundamentalists, nor are the Hindu extremists the only element in India who are given to such brute conduct. The police in India is getting more and more infected with the virus of communal hatred. Human rights observers in India have often been led to express the fear that continued exposure of the law enforcing services to brutal situations tend to make them insensitive to human suffering. They get hardened and act in wanton manner when dealing with the public over the institutions which the public holds in respect and reverence. Bigotry and fanaticism in India is fanned by India's second largest political party which is now confidently projecting its rise as India's largest and hence the ruling party of the future. Bigotry brutalizes a whole community and culture as it seems to be the case in India today.

Pakistan: Spokesman Expresses Concern Over Indian Shrine Siege

BK2603035596 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 26 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Commenting on the latest incident at Hazratbal shrine in occupied Kashmir, a Foreign Office spokesman has said that Pakistan has expressed serious concern at the continuing desecration of holy places in the occupied Kashmir by Indian forces.

The spokesman pointed out that the Indian forces had desecrated Charar Sharif shrine last year and have now laid second siege of Hazratbal shrine denying the Muslims to visit their most reverend place in Kashmir where the hair of the holy prophet, peace be upon him, is preserved. The spokesman added that the freedom of practicing religious obligations is being denied to the people of Kashmir and innocent people have been martyred.

Pakistan: Possible Deal With France for Mirage 2000-5's Viewed

BK2603103596 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 26 Mar 96 p 11

[Article by Kaleem Omar: "Will Pakistan Get 'New Generation' Mirage 2000s?"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] — For the past two years, Pakistan has been negotiating with France for the purchase of up to 40 Mirage 2000-5 fighter aircraft, which at an estimated price tag of $80 million per copy (including weapons systems, spares and logistical support), would cost something like $3.2 billion.

The deal has been bogged down for quite some time now over the issue of funding. As things stand at present, France is unwilling to offer long-term credit to Pakistan for acquiring the air craft and wants payment in cash. The question is, where is an already cash-strapped Pakistan going to find $3.2 billion in one go?

To compound the problem, there is no indication of when, if ever, Pakistan is likely get back any of the $650 million it has paid to American manufacturers for the 28 embargoed F-16 aircraft. So Pakistan cannot count on using this money to partially pay for the Mirage 2000-5s

But there is also another issue involved in the contemplated deal with France: will the Mirage 2000-5s that Pakistan is thinking of buying include the new generation of air-launched weapons that the French Air Force now plans to retro-fit to its own existing fleet of Mirage 2000-5s?

If France does not agree to include these weapons systems in the package it has offered to Pakistan then the Pakistan Air Force [PAF] — which is already outgunned by the much bigger Indian Air Force — could find itself at a serious operational disadvantage in future conflicts.

What the PAF should be looking for in the case of the Mirage 2000-5s is the next generation of weapons systems, rather than five- or ten-year-old weapons systems. The maxim "generals are always prepared to fight the last war when what they should be prepared for is the next war" applies equally to aerial warfare.

The future standard air-to-air weapon for the French Air Force Mirage 2000-5s is the Missile d'Interception at de Combat Arien (MICA) developed by Matra Defence and Space, Velizy, around a unique concept: identical missiles will be suitable for both beyond-the horizon, to ranges of more than 50 kilometers and for dogfighting air-combat situations, depending upon what interchangeable guidance systems they are fitted with.

For air-to-ground missions, the French Air Force will standardise on the Apache family of weapons, jointly developed by the Paris- based Matra and Aerospatiale Missiles, Chatillon, France, says a report in the March 10 edition of the American weekly military journal Defence News.

The first Apache to enter service will be a submunitions dispenser designed for airfield attack, but subsequent versions, with a variety of capabilities in terms of range, will be developed for area attack and for medium-range and long-range precision strike. This last version is designated Systems de Croisier Autonome Lonue Protee.

According to Defence News, the French Air Force is developing two new air-launched weapons for induction early in the next century. One is a new family of modular, short-range and high-precision weapons to replace the laser-guided AS-301, and various kinds of guided bombs. The second is an anti-radiation missile to replace the Matra Marte. Exploratory studies have been opened on this subject with Germany.

To obtain a force multiplier effect, the French Air Force will rely on the multi-mission capabilities of the new Rafale multi-purpose fighter, which is to replace several dedicated combat aircraft, including the Mirage 2000-A and Mirage F-1C interceptors, the Mirage F-1CT and Jaguar attack aircraft, and the Mirage F-1 CR reconnaissance fighter.

Rafales armed with the Air-Sol Moyenne Portee stand-off nuclear missile also will replace Mirage IVP nuclear bombers and later, Mirage 2000N nuclear strike fighters.

Pakistan: Defense Minister Denies Government To 'Forego' F-16's

BK2603110196 Islamabad THE NATION in English 26 Mar 96 p 12

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] — Defence Minister, Aftab Shahban Mirani Monday [25 March] reiterated that defence of the country would remain top priority of the government. Talking to APP here, he said that he government has been consistently endeavouring to better equip its forces.

To a query, the Minister said, allegation to forego F-16 aircraft was baseless and without any foundation.

He said Pakistan's persistent demand had been that either we be given the aircraft or our money returned.

Mirani said it was the political sagacity of our PM [Prime Minister] Benazir Bhutto, who ceaselessly worked hard and succeeded to re-establish friendly relations with the United States.

This has resulted in opening up new vistas of cooperation in various fields and the resultant decision on the return of our equipment and money, the Minister added.

To another question, Mirani said, "the decision regarding Mirage 2000-5 is at the stage of technical evolution, which is a pre-requisite before the matter is processed further".

Pakistan: PPP Supports Treason Charges Against Supreme Court Judges

BK2503122596 Islamabad THE NATION in English 25 Mar 96 p 14

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad — The Parliamentary Party meeting of PPP [Pakistan People's Party] and its allied parties, termed the Supreme Court verdict on appointment of judges as against the government here on Sunday [24 March] and advised the government to institute a case of treason against the judges who passed this judgement. Chaired by Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, and attended by 109 MPs, the meeting erupted in applause when MNA [Member of National Assembly] from Lahore Arshad Ghurki suggested instituting the treason cases against the judges.

Briefing newsmen, after the meeting, Parliamentary Secretary, Izhar Amrohvi said the Prime Minister briefed the MPs on the government's separation of the judiciary from the executive saying two committees one each of bureaucrats and politicians were set up to bring this about which was done so in light of their reports. She said in view of the time constraint, the separation was brought about through an ordinance otherwise, the government had decided to do so through legislation. She said the ordinance would be turned into legislation soon.

The Prime Minister said the ordinance would be tabled in the Parliament soon to turn it into a law and if needed, a special committee would be set up to obtain opposition's views. The meeting also decided "not to issue any statement on the Supreme Court ruling until the detailed judgement is released by the Supreme Court."

The Prime Minister said, apart from the law enforcing agencies, any one who speaks the language of bullets would be considered a terrorist and would not be spared.

Pakistan: Ministers Rule Out Compromise With Karachi 'Terrorists'

BK2403113196 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 24 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Interior Minister Nasirullah Khan Babar has said the struggle of the Pakistan People's Party [PPP] against terrorists and anti-state elements will continue until they are eliminated from the country. Addressing a public meeting in Rawalpindi on Pakistan Day yesterday, he said the Altaf Group is involved in terrorist activities in Karachi, and Altaf Hussain has been shocked to see the sudden improvement in law and order in the city.

Speaking at the function, Khalid Ahmad Khan Kharal, federal minister for information and broadcasting, said that the government will not compromise with terrorists at any price. He regretted that opposition leader Mohammad Nawaz Sharif did not condemn the terrorists when the Altaf Group killed rangers and people from Punjab and Northwest Frontier Province.

PPP Secretary General Sheikh Rafiq Ahmed lauded in his speech the courage with which Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto restored peace in Karachi without using the army. He said no enemy of Pakistan will be allowed to harm peace in Karachi. A number of other PPP leaders addressed the meeting.

Through a resolution, the public meeting expressed solidarity with the Kashmiri people for their right of self-determination and expressed appreciation for the government's Kashmir policy.

Pakistan: Indian Efforts To Gain Influence in Afghanistan Reported

BK2503052896 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 23 Mar 96 p 12

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, March 22 — The installation of a Rabbani-Mas'ud coalition and confluence of interests of Russia and its close neighbours in Kabul, have provided a heaven-sent opportunity to India to intensify its efforts to reassert itself in Pakistan's strategic backyard Afghanistan.

According to informed sources, India cashing in on this situation has seized the opportunity to reach a consensus with Russia and its neighbours to formulate a joint strategy and policy for Afghanistan.

Indian interest in Afghan affairs is not a new development. From 1973 up to 1990, India connived with its erstwhile ally in the Soviet Union to establish a deep ingress in Afghanistan. Obviously, the Indian interest was motivated by its "Pakistani concerns". During the Afghan jihad, Indian intelligence agency RAW [Research and Analysis Wing] actively colluded with its counterparts KGB and KHAD [Khedamat-E-Etela'at-E-Dawalati] to conduct terrorist attacks inside Pakistan to foment unrest and destabilise it with the intention of rendering Pakistan impotent to help Afghans.

The main constituents of the joint strategy of Russia and its neighbours are 1) Develop deep and lasting ingress in Afghanistan and render all-out moral, material and diplomatic support to the Rabbani-Mas'ud regime. 2) Ensure Pakistan is excluded from the future set-up in Afghanistan, which implies that formulation of a pro-Pakistan government should be prevented at all costs. If this is not possible, at minimum ensure that the Indian interests are safeguarded in Afghanistan by surrogates of Rabbani and Mas'ud. 3) Join with Russia for getting the routes of the Central Asian republics using the Iranian route.

In order to achieve these objectives, the Indians have extended help and assistance to Afghanistan in multi-dimensional fields. In military sphere, the Indians are helping the Kabul regime in following manner:

Training of Afghan intelligence agency (RAW) personnel at New Delhi. Indians have also provided Rs [rupees] 10 million to General Fahim of RAW for the establishment of Afghan intelligence agency.

— Training of 28 Afghan pilots in India.

— Two Su-7 were sent to India for overhaul and installation of pod for carrying napalm bombs.

On Nov 12 and 13 night two cargo flights brought two serviceable aircraft engines and other spares from India.

— Provision of assistance in making Scud system operational.

— On Nov 23, 1995, 11 Indians reportedly arrived at Bagram. This raises the strength of the Indian personnel to 60 (including 9 pilots). There are confirmed reports of Indian pilots (Kirat Singh and Karmat Singh), aeronautical engineers (Gorbechan Singh, Misri Ram and Rameesh Kurnar). Apart from this there are also reports of arrival of more Indian pilots during the last quarter of 1995. Reportedly these Indian pilots also took part in an air raid on Dec 9, 1995 killing 27 Taleban.

Indians also delivered advanced radar to the Afghan Defence Ministry during first quarter of 1995 which has been installed close to the TV booster in Kabul.

— Supplies of large quantity of ammunition boxes at Bagram with Indian marking have been confirmed.

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 352
MERRIFIELD, VA

This is a U.S. Government publication produced by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS). Its contents in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the U.S. Government.

FBIS collects, translates, disseminates, and analyzes foreign open-source information on behalf of the U.S. Government. Its publications may contain copyrighted material. ***Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.***

- Bracketed indicators before the first sentence of each item describe the way in which the material was processed by FBIS.
- Headlines and all bracketed explanatory notes are supplied by FBIS.
- Personal and place names are rendered in accordance with the decisions of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names as adapted by FBIS. Unverified names in radio and television material appear in parentheses and are spelled phonetically; words and phrases in parentheses preceded by a question mark are unclear in the original and deduced from context.

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

U.S. Government Customers

For a list of FBIS products, to subscribe to an FBIS publication, or to indicate a change of address contact:

FBIS
P.O. Box 2604
Washington, DC 20013-2604
Telephone: (202) 338-6735
FAX: (703) 733-6042

Non-Government Customers

Subscriptions are available from the National Technical Information Service:

NTIS
5285 Port Royal Road
Springfield, VA 22161
Telephone: (703) 487-4630
FAX: (703) 321-8547

New subscribers should expect a 30-day delay in receipt of the first issue.